National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

NL-339 (r. 88/04) c

Canada

National Library of Canada
Canadian Theses Service
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Service des thèses canadiennes

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-55382-0

Canadä

The University of Alberta

Environmental Influences on Principal Behaviour: Implications for Principals and for Training Principals

by

Ronald James Kirkman

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Education

Department of Educational Administration

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 1989

The University of Alberta

Release Form

Name of Author: Ronald James Kirkman

Title of Thesis: Environmental Influences on Principal Behaviour: Implications for Principals and for Training Principals

Degree: Master of Education

Year This Degree Granted: 1989

Permission is hereby granted to The University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

. . . .
(Student's signature)

Student's permanent address:

4 Artaud Place
Rapid Creek 5792
Northern Territory
Australia

Date: 27th June, 1989

The University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Environmental Influences on Principal Behaviour: Implications for Principals and for Training Principals" submitted by Ronald James Kirkman in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

. . . .
(Supervisor)

James Blakey
. . . .

. . . .

Date: 23rd June, 1989 . . .

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the work of principals in selected schools in Alberta to see what influence specific environmental factors had on their behaviour. It further sought the implications any environmentally specific behaviours may have for principals and for those responsible for training principals.

A qualitative research method was employed to study the work of three effective elementary school principals who work in suburban and rural areas, in large and small schools, and in areas where parents were classified as either high or middle socio-economic and educational levels. The small number of participants was chosen to ensure that thick descriptions of their schools and roles could be developed. Specific environmental factors were limited as indicated above to decrease the range of influences which may cause changes to behaviour. It was found during the course of the study, however, that the chosen schools were influenced by a further four specific environmental factors: special education classes, low local enrolment compared with design capacity, part-time teachers, and different education jurisdictions.

The principals involved were observed and interviewed in their own schools and co-operated in a joint interview.

The research showed that specific environmental factors do influence principal behaviour. It appears that the size of the school has the greatest bearing on principal behaviour, as it would on a leader in any organisation. Socio-economic and educational levels of parents also have a significant bearing on the tasks principals carry out. Each of the identified environmental factors had some influence on principal behaviour.

The researcher claims that identifiable characteristics of principal behaviour due to environmental differences have major implications for principals, education jurisdictions, and trainers of principals.

The most significant implication is that there is no current training program to assist principals to cope with the differences in work caused by specific environmental factors. It is recommended that an expert system be developed to fill this major gap in current principal-training practice.

It is emphasised that research in many more schools is required to verify findings from this study and to generalise sufficiently for an expert system to be produced.

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. D. A. MacKay for his direction, guidance, and friendly encouragement during the course of this research and throughout my studies at the University of Alberta. My appreciation is also extended to members of my committee, Dr. J. Blakey and Dr. T. C. Montgomerie, for their valuable advice.

I am indebted particularly to Amy, Beryl, and Craig without whose active participation this study of three principals in Alberta would not have been as enjoyable or as rewarding. I thank their school districts for giving me permission to work in their schools.

The Department of Educational Administration of the University of Alberta and the Department of Education of the Northern Territory of Australia made this study possible by awarding me the A. W. Reeves Memorial Fellowship. The generosity extended to me and the faith shown in me by those organisations are gratefully acknowledged.

My special thanks go to my children Jodie and Andrew. Their love and support have helped keep me on target and anxious to return to Australia.

Table of Contents

Chapter Page

1. The Research Problem 1
    - Context Within Which the Research Was Conducted 1
    - Problem Statement 2
    - Rationale 4
        - Leadership and Decision Making 4
        - Varied Environments 6
    - Conceptual Framework 7
    - Organisation of the Thesis 8
2. Literature Review 10
    - The Interpretive Paradigm 10
    - A Need for Effective Leaders 11
    - Principals' Tasks 12
    - Environmental Influences on Principal Behaviour 14
    - Training Principals 15
    - Expert Systems 19
3. Methodology 21
    - Research Paradigm 21
    - Research Procedures 24
        - Selection of Informants 24
        - Development of an Interview Guide 27
            - Stage one: Questionnaires 27
            - Stage two: The first interview 28
            - Stage three: Observation and interview 29
            - Stage four: The final interview guide 29

Chapter Page

Interview guide for the group interview 30

Pilot Study 31

Data Collection 31

Getting to know principals and their schools . . 31

The individual interviews 32

The group interview 35

Coding the data 36

Data analysis 39

Implications 40

Trustworthiness 41

Generalizability 43

Ethical considerations 43

4. Amy's School, Riverside 45

Getting to Know Amy and Her School 45

The School 47

Size 47

Setting 47

Enrolment Level 47

Socio-Economic and Educational Levels of Parents . . 48

Parents Able to Cope 49

Part-Time Teachers 49

Summary 49

Amy's Work 49

Instructional Leader 49

Knowledge of children 50

Amy's personal leadership 50

Chapter Page

Delegation of instructional leadership 51

Staff Developer 52

Informal programs 52

Formal programs 53

Communicator 54

Visual communication 54

Oral communication 54

Written communication 55

Business Manager 56

Facilities Manager 57

Staff Supervisor 58

Assessment of staffing requirements 58

Recruitment 58

Informal supervision 58

Formal supervision 60

Public Relations Officer 60

Parental responsibilities 61

Parents as partners in education 62

Dealings with the wider community 63

Student Developer 64

Students as individuals 64

Evaluation of students 65

Valuing the worth of students 66

Dealing with bright children 66

Innovator 67

High Priestess 68

Chapter Page

5. Beryl's School, Suburbia 69

Getting to Know Beryl and Her School 69

The School 70

Size 70

Setting 71

Enrolment Level 71

Socio-Economic and Educational Levels of Parents . . 71

Special Education Classes 71

Summary 72

Beryl's Work 72

Instructional Leader 72

Knowledge of children 72

Beryl's personal leadership 73

Delegation of instructional leadership 74

Staff Developer 75

Informal programs 75

Formal programs 76

Communicator 76

Visual communication 76

Oral communication 77

Written communication 78

Business Manager 79

Facilities Manager 80

Staff Supervisor 81

Informal supervision 81

Formal supervision 84

Chapter Page

Public Relations Officer 85

Parental responsibilities 85

Parents as partners in education 86

Dealings with the wider community 87

Student Developer 88

Students as individuals 88

Evaluation of students 89

Valuing the worth of students 89

Dealing with students in adaptation classes . . 90

Innovator 91

High Priestess 92

6. Craig's School, Broad Meadows 94

Getting to Know Craig and His School 94

The School 95

Size 95

Setting 96

Enrolment Level 96

Socio-Economic and Educational Levels of Parents . . 96

Stability 97

Part-Time Teachers 97

Summary 98

Craig's Work 98

Instructional Leader 98

Knowledge of children 98

Craig's personal leadership 98

Delegation of instructional leadership 99

Chapter Page

Staff Developer 100
    Informal programs 100
    Formal programs 101
Communicator 103
    Visual communication 103
    Oral communication 104
    Written communication 105
Business Manager 106
Facilities Manager 109
    Buildings manager 109
    Bussing 110
Staff Supervisor 111
    Formal supervision 112
    Informal supervision 113
    Part-time staff 113
Public Relations Officer 114
    Parental responsibilities 114
    Parents as partners in education 115
    Dealings with the wider community 116
Student Developer 117
    Students as individuals 117
    Evaluation of students 118
    Valuing the worth of students 119
    Thought for the day 120
Innovator 120
High Priest 121

Chapter Page

7. Similarities Between Principals' Tasks 124

Organisation of This Chapter 124

Analysis of Similarities 125

Instructional Leader 125

Knowledge of children 125

The principal's own leadership 125

Delegation of instructional leadership 126

Staff Developer 127

Communicator 127

Visual communication 127

Oral communication 128

Written communication 129

Business Manager 130

Facilities Manager 131

Staff Supervisor 132

Public Relations Officer 134

Parental responsibilities 134

Parents as partners in education 134

Dealing with the wider community 135

Student Developer 136

Students as individuals 137

Evaluation of students 138

Valuing the worth of students 139

Innovator 139

High Priest 140

Chapter Page

8. Principals' Tasks Which Appear Environmentally Determined 148

Organisation of This Chapter 148

Analysis of Differences 149

Instructional Leader 149

Knowledge of children 149

Personal leadership 151

Staff Developer 153

Communicator 154

Business Manager 157

Facilities Manager 162

Staff Supervisor 165

Part-time teachers 166

Public Relations Officer 168

Parental expectations 168

Levels of parental involvement in schools . . . 169

Parents as partners in education 172

Parents coping with problems 174

The school as the community centre 175

Student Developer 177

Counselling students 177

Organisational flexibility 179

Dealing with bright children 180

Dealing with children in special education classes 181

Student discipline 182

Innovator 184

Chapter Page

High Priest 185

9. Findings and Implications for Principals Starting in New Schools, School Jurisdictions, Principal Trainers, and Further Research 187

Findings of Similarities and Their Implications 188

Findings 188

Instructional leader 188

Staff developer 189

Communicator 190

Business manager 190

Facilities manager 191

Staff supervisor 191

Public relations officer 192

Student developer 192

Innovator 193

High priest 193

Implications for Principal Trainers 193

Implications for Principals 195

Findings of Differences and Their Implications 195

Findings 195

School size 195

School setting 197

Educational levels 198

Socio-economic and educational levels of parents 199

Enrolment compared with design capacity 202

Part-time teachers 203

Chapter Page

Special education classes 203

Education jurisdictions 204

Implications for Principals 204

School size 205

School setting 206

Educational levels 207

Socio-economic and educational levels of parents 207

Enrolment compared with design capacity 209

Part-time teachers 209

Special education classes 209

Education jurisdictions 210

Implications for Education Jurisdictions 210

Implications for Principal Trainers 210

School size 211

School setting 211

Educational levels 211

Socio-economic and educational levels of parents 211

Implications for Further Research 213

Reference List 215

Attachments:

1. Draft Questionnaire 219

2. Questionnaire 224

3. Letter to Participating Principals 231

4. Interview Guide for Group Interview 233

List of Figures

Figure Page

1. Relating environmentally directed principal behaviour to the training of principals 7

Chapter 1

The Research Problem

Context Within Which the Research Was Conducted

Research into effective and excellent schools highlights the vital role of the principals in developing and maintaining high standards in schools. Such research has identified specific environmental factors, such as educational levels and socio-economic levels, which impinge on the work of the principal in schools studied, and some researchers have indicated that individualised training programs would assist principals to meet the demands of schools influenced by them. However, there has been no study conducted to identify clearly all of those environmental factors which may influence principal behaviour. Neither has there been an individualised training program developed to assist principals in that area. On page 211 of this thesis I explain briefly the very wide range of environmental factors which schools experience. In fact, any school would display a variety of such factors. It is probably the enormous number of combinations and permutations of those factors which helps to make each school unique. Such diversity is beyond the scope of a research project at this level. However, this is a beginning in the development of grounded theory and resulting implications for trainers of principals. This could well be used as a pilot study in developing an expert system which could deliver individualised training programs to principals.

Problem Statement

There is a large body of research on leadership and school principals. Most studies have concentrated on developing general theories governing leadership. However, some research has indicated that the individual school environment may have considerable bearing on the leadership style required of the effective school principal. One of the weaknesses of current training programs is that "they are designed to generalize across schools and districts" (Leithwood, Stanley, & Montgomery, 1987, p. 52). Willower's studies with Kmetz (1982) and Martin (1981) noted that there were distinct differences between the way elementary and high school principals spent their days. Further, Kmetz and Willower surmise that the substantial individual differences observed in elementary principals' work habits "probably can be attributed to such things as . . . environmental demands" (p. 74). Hallinger and Murphy (1985) say that "studies of leadership suggest that managerial behavior is strongly influenced by organizational and societal contexts" (p. 218). They also state that "principals of the smaller schools . . . tend to be more involved in managing curriculum and instruction than principals in larger schools" (p. 235). In a study of effective schools in low- and high-socioeconomic schools, Hallinger and Murphy (1986) identified considerable differences between principal behaviours in the two types of schools. That study supported the findings of Cross and Bennet (1969) who said, "A number of writers have discussed the influence of the socioeconomic level of the community on the school. All essentially agree that the operation of a school is profoundly influenced by the socioeconomic character of its community" (p. 1). Literature suggests that training programs for principals should reflect the differences in principal behaviour caused by environmental factors.

Culbertson (1979) says that most training programs for principals are based on rural and suburban settings. He states that "problems encountered in urban environments received little attention. It was in response to the needs identified in the planning meetings that the UCEA decided to develop new materials to train people who expected to assume positions of leadership in urban schools" (p. vii). Salley, McPherson, and Baehr (1979) said that two "issues [which] provided the impetus for the research program on the principalship [were] . . . to describe the varying conditions under which principals work [and] to develop training programs to help principals work more effectively under these varying conditions" (p. 24). Cross and Bennet (1969) suggested such a need a decade earlier:

> A second implication concerns the nature of college and university programs for the preparation of elementary school principals. The prevalent practice is to have a single preparation program for all elementary school principals. Since the nature of the challenge to principals appears to vary with the socioeconomic composition of the school's community, it seems appropriate to consider the diversification of preparation programs accordingly. (p. 17)

In Alberta there is a wide variety of schools, including elementary, elementary/junior high, junior high, junior/senior high, and senior high schools. These may be in public or separate school districts, divisions, or counties, or be private schools. Further, these schools are located in very differing environments, low or high socio-economic urban or suburban areas, tightly-knit farming communities, mining towns, native communities, very isolated communities, and communities with multi-racial populations.

Leithwood, Stanley, and Montgomery (1987) state that "the behaviors in which principals actually engage while doing their work are legion. A comprehensive description of these behaviors defies any research method currently available" (p. 55). There can be no substantial argument with the first half of that statement, but I believe that it is possible, given sufficient resources, to investigate principals' work in a very wide range of schools and come up with a comprehensive list, even if not a completely exhaustive list, of those behaviours.

The problem being addressed in this study is fourfold. First is an attempt to look at all of the major tasks that the three principals being studied perform. The second part of the problem is to identify those environmental factors which make each school unique. Thirdly, there is the problem of identifying which tasks are generic to all principals and which are due to specific environmental factors. The fourth matter to be addressed is implications, including implications for the trainers of principals.

Rationale

Leadership and Decision Making

Peters and Waterman (1982), in a study of "excellent" companies,

> admit that our bias at the beginning was to discount the role of leadership heavily. . . . Unfortunately, what we found was that associated with almost every excellent company was a strong leader (or two) who seemed to have had a lot to do with making the company excellent in the first place. (p. 26)

The principal is appointed to provide leadership to his/her school. With the current pressure on schools to achieve excellence it is quite apparent that we need excellent principals to administer them. Studies carried out by members of the Department of Educational Administration of the University of Alberta have shown clearly that school board chairmen, superintendents, and teachers place leadership qualities such as management skills and communication skills, which require decision making, at the top of their list of characteristics required of principals (ADP Project Team '87, 1987; Montgomerie, McIntosh, & Mattson, 1987; Red Deer Outreach '86, 1986; Vermilion Outreach '87, 1987). "Decision making has been widely recognized as being at the heart of organization and administration" (Owens, 1987, p. 267). Campbell, Corbally, and Nystrand (1983, p. 123), and Hoy and Miskel (1987, p. 316), support that view.

To assist principals and aspiring principals in developing and enhancing their leadership skills, appropriate preservice and inservice programs are required. If such courses can concentrate on the specific types of problems on which they will be required to make decisions, significant benefits should accrue to participants, and through them, to their schools. To ensure that the training opportunities provided meet the needs of schools, this study aims to identify the most common problems which arise in schools and require principals to make decisions.

Leithwood and Stager (1986) state that "highly effective principals quite consciously used an explicit strategy for sorting in daily problem solving" (p. 12). It is expected that problems identified by principals in schools in Alberta can be sorted into categories. It is anticipated that this information will be used initially to develop a wider study and finally as a basis for an expert system. If school jurisdictions had access to an expert system, those undergoing training could do so while working. Therefore, the cost of developing an expert system would eventually be offset by the comparatively low cost of training using the system. Although this could not be classed as a financial saving, as no training in this area of the principalship is offered at present, it would be filling a major need in principal training.

Varied Environments

As stated earlier, there has been little research into the effects on leadership and decision-making styles of the different environments in which principals work. Martin and Willower (1981) and Kmetz and Willower (1982) conducted case studies of elementary and high school principals in a variety of settings. Kmetz and Willower suggested that similar studies using the environment as a variable would be worthwhile (p. 76). Martin and Willower recommend that "further directed observation with other samples is clearly desirable" (p. 87). Estler (1988) states that "decision-making processes in educational organizations look and operate differently under different conditions" (p. 305). Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) say, "All this argues for significant differences between the two principal roles [elementary and secondary] although the issue has not been given much systematic scrutiny" (p. 10). Research cited previously indicates differences between the roles of principals in high- and low-socioeconomic communities, in rural/suburban and urban environments, and in small and large schools. Therefore, it is argued that there is merit in investigating the different school environments which exist in Alberta to see whether different categories of problems are identified in, say, urban high schools and rural elementary schools.

The three schools in this study are influenced by the following environmental factors: elementary schools, large schools, small schools, suburban schools, rural schools, high socio-economic and education levels, middle socio-economic and education levels, filled to design capacity, enrolment well below design capacity, special education classes, part-time teachers, and different education jurisdictions. It is hoped that information generated in this study will be used as the basis for a wider study and, later, a training program for principals. The notion that training programs can be based on specific categories of problems for specific types of schools rather than being based on general theory alone is supported by Estler (1988):

> In the training of administrators, we might replace recipes with skills in analysis of organizational dynamics and concepts. . . . By understanding a variety of approaches . . . and the range of organizational conditions . . . the administrator can be better prepared to, and even enjoy, organizational ambiguity and complexity. (p. 316)

Conceptual Framework

I believe that this study can be shown diagrammatically. Figure 1 shows tasks which are specific to particular school environmental factors. Those tasks lead to implications for principals which, in turn, lead to implications for trainers of principals.

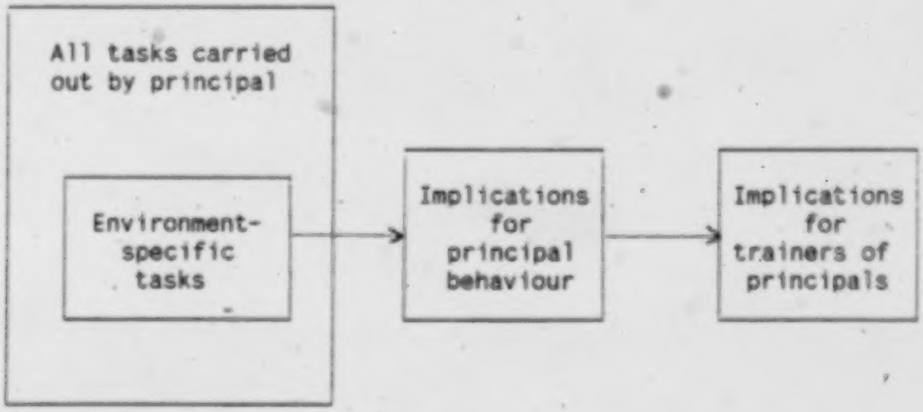
All tasks carried out by principal
Environment-specific tasks
Implications for principal behaviour
Implications for trainers of principals

Figure 1. Relating environmentally directed principal behaviour to the training of principals.

Organisation of the Thesis

The "Literature Review," Chapter 2, was conducted to see what previous research says about the need for effective leadership, principals' tasks, training of principals, and expert systems. Further investigation of the literature became necessary as a result of the findings of this study. I have attempted to discover whether these findings agree with findings of previous research or not.

Chapter 3 describes in some detail the methods used in the conduct of this research.

Each of the next three successive chapters is devoted to one of the principals and her or his school. Thick descriptions of the principals' tasks were developed from observations in their schools, a series of individual interviews and contacts, and a group interview. The major interviews were audiotaped and transcribed for analysis.

Chapter 7 looks at the tasks which are common to the three principals. These tasks cover the major areas of the principals' work and probably are generic to all principals.

Chapter 8 looks at the tasks which are not common to all schools. It is argued that those tasks can be attributed to one or more of each school's peculiar environmental factors.

Chapter 9 summarises the findings of the two preceding chapters and links those with principal behaviour, implications for principals, implications for education jurisdictions, implications for trainers of principals, and implications for further research. It is argued that current training practices are most appropriate to prepare principals for the tasks which are generic to all school settings. It is further argued that there are no current programs which train principals to meet tasks caused by specific environmental factors. A case is put forward for the development of an expert system to fill that gap in the training of principals.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

I have carried out a review of some of the current literature appropriate to my topic with six main purposes in mind. These are: (a) to find support for conducting this research within the interpretive paradigm; (b) to find evidence to support the notion that to be effective, organizations need strong leaders; (c) to develop an understanding of the way principals work and the types of tasks that they perform; (d) to investigate other research which has studied how specific environmental factors affect principal behaviour or affect schools in such a way that principal behaviour must be affected, and relate their findings to findings in this study; (e) to obtain ideas on what is required in training programs for principals and to see if the literature suggests any beneficial effects of individualized training programs; and (f) to find support for the development of an expert system.

The Interpretive Paradigm

In Chapter 3 I go to considerable lengths to describe how I came to the decision that this research should be conducted through qualitative methods. There has been a great deal of research conducted into the work of principals and into schools in specific environments. However, I could find no research which links a wide range of environmental peculiarities with appropriate principal behaviour. Therefore, I consider this particular piece of research to be in a virtually new field. I also believed that principals are the most appropriate people to talk informatively about their role in regard to specific factors and provide rich descriptions of those roles. Field and Morse (1985) say that "qualitative methods should be used when there is little known about a domain . . . [and] are particularly useful when describing a phenomenon from the emic perspective" (p. 11). Rist (1982) says, "Qualitative research brings back into focus . . . the study of human beings *as human beings* to center stage" (p. x). Gay (1987) states that

> the interview . . . can produce in-depth data not possible with a questionnaire . . . is most appropriate for asking questions which cannot effectively be structured into a multiple choice format . . . can adapt the situation to each subject . . . [and] may also result in more accurate and honest responses. (pp. 202-203)

Further support for working in the interpretive paradigm was found in Bogdan and Biklen (1982) and Lolas (1986).

A Need for Effective Leaders

Peters and Waterman (1982) repeatedly stressed the positive impact of outstanding leaders in the excellent companies they studied. They particularly emphasised the leader's role in shaping an organization's vision and culture. Sergiovanni (1984) places the same emphasis on the importance of principal leadership in schools. In fact, there is a wealth of literature to support the notion that principals' behaviours impact on the effectiveness of schools.

Leithwood and Montgomery's study (1986) is based on the results of research on the work of principals. They stress the positive influence that effective principals have on their schools. "Principal behaviors have been demonstrated, in these forty studies, to be positively related to six types of school outcome" (p. 2), and again, "the impact of principals on students and teachers can be educationally significant"

(p. 4). Leithwood, Stanley, and Montgomery (1987) state that "the role of the principal is critical to the adoption, use, and subsequent institutionalization of innovations in schools" (p. 49). This indicates the principal's role as change agent is an extremely significant role in such a rapidly changing society. Leithwood and Montgomery tie the principal's effect on schools closely with decision making when they say that "four categories or dimensions of principal behavior have been found in our research to be especially important in improving school effectiveness. . . . 'decision-making' is a superordinate dimension of principal behaviour" (p. 15). This is a clear indication that improving a principal's skills in decision making is worth the effort of producing appropriate training programs. Griffiths (1988) stated:

> The Commission [The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration] was deeply concerned with what it called "a vision of school leadership." It accepted the concept of school site management as the keystone in the restructuring of schools and as the basis for its concept of administration. This concept had its origin in the J. C. Worthy (1950) study of Sears, Roebuck and a few years later in the restructuring of General Electric (Drucker, 1973). They both stressed the need for what Drucker called "federated decentralization"--semi-autonomous units working under the loose direction of central headquarters. The idea was adapted to education in the mid-50s (Griffiths, 1956) and it has languished ever since. The best example is now to be found in Edmonton, Canada. (p. 11)

Principals' Tasks

There is a plethora of literature based on the tasks principals carry out, how they manage their work, and how they could be described. Comparing the results of four pieces of research, Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) describe the principal variously as manager, initiator, responder, humanist, broker, politician, helper, catalyst, juggler, organizer, rationalist, group supporter, performance supporter, staff developer, interpersonal leader, eclectic leader, formal leader, and administrative leader (p. 225). The Vermilion Outreach (1987) team adds teacher evaluator and public relations "salesman" (p. xvii). The A.D.P. (1987) team contributes "values manager" (p. 4) and "problem solver" (p. 51). Sergiovanni (1984) caps these with visionary, culture builder, and high priest. Each of these descriptions is generally accepted and accounts for a wide variety of tasks which the principal must perform.

The Red Deer Outreach team (1986) lists some 16 categories of tasks carried out by the principal. They break those down into 60 things which the principal must be able to do (pp. 13-15). They claim that principals are expected to be almost super-human and include as "Extra expectations: Be a Wonder Woman or Superman; Walk on water; Leap over tall buildings in a single bound; and Be faster than a speeding bullet" (p. 15). Each of the 60 identified areas could be further broken down into numerous individual tasks. Martin and Willower (1981) confirm the wide variety of tasks carried out by principals and the rapid change from one task to another. "Weldy's depiction of the principal as manifesting 'the busy person syndrome' was substantiated. . . . the high volume of tasks and the rapid rate of their performance caused the principals to change their activities every three or four minutes" (p. 83). As mentioned elsewhere, Leithwood, Stanley, and Montgomery (1987, p. 55) describe a legion of tasks which defy a description of behaviours by any known research method.

It is obvious, then, that any study hoping to provide information on which training programs for principals can be based must be highly selective. Limiting the scope of the research to those areas of decision making which are peculiar to specific types of schools may reduce the task to manageable proportions. The scope of the study was further limited by concentrating on principals who are identified as highly effective by colleagues, superordinates, and University of Alberta faculty members as it is argued that training programs to be developed should be based on the ideas and practices of acknowledged experts.

Environmental Influences on Principal Behaviour

Textbooks commonly used in educational administration courses contain a wealth of support for the findings regarding the generic functions of principals as discussed in Chapter 7 and summarised in Chapter 9. The work of Kroeze (1984) is also used to support my findings in this area. The long quotation from Griffiths (1988) included in the next section, "Training Principals," further supports my findings that the similarities found between the tasks carried out by the three principals in this study are generic tasks and that appropriate training is already available to help prepare principals for those areas of their work.

The search for literature to confirm or refute my findings regarding the effects of environment-specific factors on principal behaviour, described in Chapter 8 and summarised in Chapter 9, was more difficult. As discussed elsewhere, I could find no literature which addressed a wide range of environmental factors and related them to the work of principals. Therefore, my search has been directed to research in several areas: (a) elementary schools, (b) small versus large schools, (c) rural versus suburban schools, (d) socio-economic influences, (e) special education, (f) part-time teachers, (g) low enrolment level compared with design capacity, and (h) different education jurisdictions. My search was more successful in some areas than in others. Comparison between previous research findings and the findings of this research is detailed in Chapter 9. The research of Hallinger and Murphy (1986) into effective schools in high and low socio-economic status areas was particularly supportive of the findings of this research in that area.

Training Principals

Although not immediately relevant to this study, the training of principals is germane when this work is considered within the context of Project DELTA, which is discussed later in this chapter. Therefore, this area of literature was briefly investigated. It is clear that in any educational system there is a large number of administrative tasks which are relevant to all principals. It is equally clear that general principles of supervision could also be imparted through traditional, group methods.

In Chapter 8, under "Implications for Principal Trainers," I explain in considerable detail how current training programs cater well to the generic problems faced by principals. Writers such as Campbell, Corbally, and Nystrand (1983), Hoy and Miskel (1987), and Owens (1987) cover the majority of the aspects of a principal/leader's work well. Pugh, Hickson, and Hinings (1983) present the diverse views of leading writers on management. Understanding ideas on organisational management presented by writers in their text helps principals and prospective principals clarify in their own minds how they can operate most effectively. Schein (1980) explores at depth how the psychology of organisations may be used most advantageously by leaders. The five texts mentioned above are only a small sample of those which are available to assist in the training of principals to meet the generic needs of school leaders. The above theoretical training can be carried out in a structured manner away from schools. There has been some criticism of this theoretical training. Griffiths (1988) supports the retention of a theoretical strand in the training of principals but goes on to support the need for more practical experience too. He suggests fives strands in their training:

> Strand I. The Theoretical Study of Educational Administration.
>
> While administration is the performance of actions, these actions have an intellectual and value basis which is found in administrative science, the behavioral sciences, philosophy, and experience. Since the fields of study are vast, it is necessary to choose and construct courses with a focus on administration. . . .
>
> Course work in administrative theory should include the study of what is now considered traditional: social systems, decision-making, contingency theory, bureaucracy, and the Barnard-Simon equilibrum theory. Equal attention should be given to the new theories and approaches to understanding organizations. . . .
>
> Strand I should also give attention to the broad underlying issues which confront educational administrators, such as: the nature of the curriculum, moral and ethical issues, how to deal with children with AIDS, the minority question, poverty in society, and the changing nature of American society. These issues might be dealt with in a cohort seminar taught by a multidisciplinary faculty using the case method. . . .
>
> Strand II. The Technical Core of Educational Administration.
>
> Every profession has a core of technical knowledge which must be possessed by its practitioners. Educational administration is no exception. It too, has a core of technical knowledge with which the educational administrator must be familiar. . . . The superintendent and principal need to know enough of that core to be able to direct and monitor the work of others who are, presumably, experts. . . .
>
> Most programs have one or more courses in each aspect of the core such as school finance or law. It would make more sense if a single course of a year's duration were constructed to incorporate the whole core and be taught from the orientation of managing experts in each core area. The components of the course would include: supervision of instruction, curriculum building and evaluation, finance, law,

> personnel, school-community relations, pupil personnel, physical facilities, and school business management. . . .
>
> ### Strand III. Solution of Problems Through the Use of Applied Research and the Development of Administrative Skills.
>
> This strand would be taught both at the university and in the schools. The problems might well be posed through the vehicles of computer simulations, cases, and filmed incidents, as well as actual problems in the schools. Successful school administrators should be employed as adjunct professors to aid in the instruction. The students would be taught how to solve problems through the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods, as well as decision-making techniques. The substance of the problems should include ethics, values, human relations, curriculum, school-community relations, finance, and in-school problems such as use of drugs, teenage pregnancies, and emotionally disturbed children.
>
> . . . Administrators have to perform, and in order to perform well they must have the basic skills of administration. These include: talking, writing (memos, announcements, public relations, releases), conducting meetings of various sizes, conducting interviews, computer literacy, negotiating, supervising teachers, working with the board of education. . . .
>
> ### Strand IV. Involvement in Supervised Practice.
>
> This strand could well be the most critical phase of the administrator's preparation. The student would start clinical experience almost from the first day of graduate study. Beginning with observations of school board meetings and administrators in action, the student would move through a series of short, special-purpose internships with master administrators. A feeling for administration would be developed through these experiences, building a background out of which later problems would be solved. The clinical experiences might well be organized by a university professor, but the students should be supervised by top administrators from outstanding public schools.
>
> ### Strand V. The Demonstration of Competence.
>
> The culminating set of experiences would not result in a research thesis, as is now the practice. Rather, it would be a demonstration that the student has really learned something about performing as an administrator. This could be demonstrated through a large computer simulation, a field test, or through handling a large case. In addition, an individual or group field study would be required.
>
> The student should be expected to demonstrate a philosophy of education and administration, sensitivity to people, and awareness of ethical values, as well as technical competence. (pp. 15-18)

McIntosh, Maynes, and Mappin (1989), in their paper entitled "Preparation for Professional Practice," state that

> the expression "preparation for professional practice" is used here to refer to those components of preparation programs in which students "learn by doing," usually by engaging in supervised practice. As compared with educators in other fields of professional practice, including the practice of teaching, administrator-educators have tended to neglect the professional practice component in their preparation programs (Miklos, 1984). Furthermore, university-based preparation programs, despite their perceived importance and their widespread acceptance in the field, have been criticized as being "too theoretical" (Manasse, 1985; National Commission, 1987). We believe that traditional classroom-based instructional approaches, which have been the subject of these criticisms, have neglected important areas of learning. (p. 1)

They go on to describe a training course for principals which is based on a series of simulations.

Sergiovanni (1985) says that "the work of professionals emerges from an interaction between available professional knowledge and individual client needs" (p. 4). This is an indication that Sergiovanni believes that all training should be on an individual basis. An expert system meets this requirement. March (1974) says that training programs for educational administrators should attempt to teach the skills "that are useful, will be used, and can be taught" (p. 394). Institution-specific skills are probably neglected in most current training programs. Therefore, an expert system which could fill this gap would be fulfilling a valuable role in training principals. Leithwood, Stanley, and Montgomery (1987) say that "to date, we have devoted much less sustained effort to providing opportunities for beginning the training of principals at their diagnosed level and moving incrementally from that level" (p. 64). Again, an expert system could fulfil such a role admirably.

Expert Systems

This thesis was conducted within the framework of Project DELTA. The aim of Project DELTA is to develop an expert system which has what is known as artificial intelligence and is a computer program based on knowledge provided by experts in the field for which it is designed. For example, an expert system has been developed to assist doctors diagnose illnesses more accurately. This system tends to be used by general practitioners and doctors in isolated locations. Another expert system is used by workers in the oil industry. Used on the spot, it can avoid the highly expensive custom of flying in an expert person, who may be anywhere in the world, to solve drilling problems.

If research funding materialises and its work is completed, DELTA's expert system will be used in the preservice and inservice training of principals of schools in Alberta, taking different school environments into account. "This 'expert' would conduct an assessment of each student and prescribe a program . . . of studies tailored to each student's situation" (University of Alberta, 1988, p. 1). Applying an expert system to the training of principals for specific situations would be much more cost efficient than using lecturers for the same purpose. This is so because it could individualise programs, as recommended by Pitner (1987, p. 78) and Leithwood, Stanley, and Montgomery (1984, p. 65), without the need for separate instructors for each student. Further, Elstein, Shulman, and Sprafka (1978) say that "human judgements in a variety of situations are less than optimal . . . [and] advocate a mechanical or statistical rule for combining inputs into a decision more consistently and accurately than people do" (p. 24).

This particular study does not involve any immediate application to expert systems. However, as it is a preliminary aspect of developing such a computer program, it was considered necessary to substantiate the value of artificial intelligence in training principals to validate this project. Therefore, a brief review of literature in this area was undertaken. Little work has been done in the development of expert systems for use in education. However, Elstein, Shulman, and Sprafka (1978), as mentioned earlier, support the notion of using artificial intelligence to assist in problem solving and decision making in medicine.

Further, the failure of current training programs to meet all the needs of principals and aspiring principals is highlighted in studies by Pitner (1987, p. 78) and Leithwood, Stanley, and Montgomery (1987, p. 69). They indicate that such programs should be based on individual needs. An expert system is designed to meet individual needs.

Wilson and Welsh (1986) asserted that "small expert systems shells have important implications for education and training" (p. 12).

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and defend the research design and conduct of this research.

Research Paradigm

My intention at the beginning of this research was to study the tasks that principals do and look for differences in those tasks which may be due to specific environmental factors. If it then appeared that those factors did cause differences, I would consider possible implications for principals and those who train them. I initially intended to work through a quantitative paradigm. However, as will be explained under "Development of the Interview Guide" and "Data Collection," I changed to a qualitative design, as this appeared to be a more appropriate method for the type of research I carried out. The main reason for the change of approach was that the former method did not seem able to obtain the type of information I wanted through usual quantitative methods. I could just have looked into principals' tasks to gain an understanding of why principals in different settings behave differently. However, I agree strongly with Field and Morse (1985) when they state that

> in a professional discipline research must eventually produce knowledge in a form that can be used to improve the practice of that profession. Answers to research questions form the basis of theory and of nursing knowledge insofar as critical concepts and constructs are identified and demonstrated. It may be descriptive, prescriptive or predictive in nature. Different kinds of theory are used for different purposes but all theory has an intrinsic purpose. (p. 7)

Field and Morse are addressing nursing research specifically, but I believe that the same applies to educational research.

There is a quantity of research data that looks at principals' work in schools, and in some cases contrasts their roles in differing environments. For example, Kmetz and Willower (1982) compared the role of elementary school principals with work done by high school principals noted by Martin and Willower (1981), and Cross and Bennet (1969) looked at problems encountered by principals in different socio-economic situations. However, I could find no literature which dealt with a wide range of differences in principal behaviour due to a similar range of specific environmental factors. I contend, therefore, that this study is basically in a new field of educational research. I eventually decided to interview three principals in their own schools and, if it appeared necessary, to bring them together for a group interview. Use of qualitative methods in this type of study is supported by the literature.

Field and Morse (1985) state that

> qualitative methods should be used when there is little known about a domain, when the investigator suspects that the present knowledge or theories may be biased, or when the research question pertains to understanding or describing a particular phenomenon or event about which little is known. Qualitative methods are particularly useful when describing a phenomenon from the emic perspective, that is, the perspective of the problem from the 'native's point of view' (Harris 1968). In nursing studies the emic perspective may be the perspective of the patient, nurse or relatives. [In education studies the perspective may be that of the principal.] Qualitative research is usually conducted in a naturalistic setting, so that the context in which the phenomenon occurs is considered to be a part of the phenomenon itself. Thus, no attempt is made by the researcher to place experimental controls upon the phenomenon being studied, or to control the 'extraneous' variables. Thus all aspects of the problem are explored, and the intervening variables arising from the context are considered a part of the problem. Using this approach the

> underlying assumptions and attitudes are examined, and the rationale for these are [sic] also elicited, within the context in which they occur. (p. 11)

Rist (1982) said:

> Qualitative research brings back into focus a concern of many who toil in the vineyard of eduational research. This mode of research brings the study of human beings *as human beings* to center stage. It represents a fundamental rejection of the ultimately irrational pursuit to quantify all aspects of human belief and experience. (p. x)

Lolas (1986) said:

> Even before the behaviorist era, many writers had questioned the validity of data obtained through introspection. Von Feuchtersleben (as quoted by Altschule [2]) wrote that "we do not observe the springs of our psychical functions when they are in active operation, but only when they are quiescent and cannot be investigated." Broussais expressed that "it will be impossible to assert, after this inspection of the interior, a single fact that will not require to be verified by the senses" (quoted by Altschule [2]). In spite of these and other criticisms, methods dependent upon introspection reached virtually the status of experimental procedures during the nineteenth century. (p. 12)

I believe that qualitative methods are necessary to "observe the springs of our psychical functions when they are in active operation." Therefore, I observed the principals in action as well as interviewing them. Gay (1987) said that "the descriptive method is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems. Typical descriptive studies are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, demographic information, conditions, and procedures" (p. 189). I contend, therefore, that my study was appropriately carried out in the interpretive paradigm.

Roberts and Burke (1989) contend that "qualitative approaches fall along a continuum from firm adherence to phenomenism, as in the phenomenology approach, to a type of phenomenism that leans toward the philosophical basis for most quantitative designs--which is positivism"

(p. 167). I believe that this study is probably close to the positivist end of the continuum. I say this because with my personal experience of over 30 years as an elementary school teacher, assistant principal, and principal; and superintendent responsible for a wide variety of types of schools in a range of settings, I could not help but have some preconceived notions, unsupported by research though they may have been, that environmental factors have a bearing on principal behaviour.

I believe that this study could be classed as a mini-ethnography. As I got to know the principals and their schools well, I do not believe that it is a "blitzkrieg ethnography" identified by Rist (cited in Gay, 1987, p. 212). Gay stated that

> the main reason for the enthusiasm for ethnography is probably dissatisfaction with more traditional approaches for investigating certain kinds of educational problems. . . . Ethnography involves intensive data collection, that is, collection of data on many variables over an extended period of time, in a naturalistic setting. The term "naturalistic setting" refers to the fact that the variables being investigated are studied *where* they naturally occur *as* they naturally occur, not in researcher-controlled environments under researcher-controlled conditions. . . . When properly used . . . ethnography has the potential for providing insights not obtainable by other methods. (pp. 208-213)

Research Procedures

Selection of Informants

Field and Morse (1985) state that

> it is important to select key informants who have knowledge of relevant information. As noted earlier, if one wants to study adolescence, then adolescents must be included as participants in the study. In primitive societies, for example, the perspective of a witch-doctor may be very different than that of the chief. The researcher needs to demonstrate that the informants are credible representatives knowledgeable about the population and who have information on the subject under study. (p. 117)

Therefore, as I was investigating the work of principals, principals were my key, and only, informants. According to definitions provided by Roberts and Burke (1989), I used a combination of "purposive" and "convenience" sampling to identify participants for my study.

> Purposive sampling is designed to select subjects who are most likely to facilitate further development of the emerging nursing knowledge, concepts, or theory. . . . Convenience sampling takes advantage of a group of subjects that fall within the population of interest and are conveniently located or readily accessible to the research team. (p. 218)

The participants were recommended to me by their colleagues, academic staff at the university, and graduate students who had some knowledge of them as being very effective principals with an interest in research. In Chapter 7, where I illustrate the many areas of tasks which seem generic to all principals, I go to some lengths to show that I found evidence that each of the three principals displays high levels of leadership skills, as principals, when measured against Sergiovanni's (1984) standards. Therefore, I believe that Amy, Beryl, and Craig are "credible representatives knowledgeable about the population [principals]."

In a research project at the Master's level I knew that I would not have the time or the resources to investigate all the environmental factors which I believed may have some influence on principal behaviour. Therefore, I decided to limit the range of obvious specific environmental differences to four in order that the study could look at them in some depth. Instead of having principals from a variety of educational levels, I chose only elementary school principals. To further reduce differences, I chose schools in middle and upper socio-economic areas. I chose a large school and two small schools, omitting very large or very small schools. I also chose two suburban schools and one rural school, the latter being close to an urban area. That choice left out inner-city or very isolated schools.

A fifth environmental factor shared by the schools in the study is that each caters to a predominantly English-speaking community. I ignored this factor during the research, and, as it was not raised by any of the principals, it is not mentioned in the data presented for analysis.

I thought that I was fortunate in having three principals recommended to me who came from schools which were distinguished as having those, and only those, environmental differences. However, during the course of the research four more environmental factors were identified as having a significant bearing on the principals' tasks, so they are included in the study. Those factors are special education classes, part-time teachers, enrolment below design capacity, and education jurisdictions in which schools are located. The last of those factors did not come to my conscious thoughts until after all of the individual interviews were completed, most data were analysed roughly, and I was preparing for the group interview. Those four additional factors added to the scope of my proposed study.

I further decided to limit my sample to three principals. This was done deliberately to ensure that I would have time to study them in some depth. It was a wise decision, as it allowed me to have an average of six meetings with each participant, some lasting several hours; have a good look at their schools; and have time to think about what I saw and what I heard. I believe that I now know them very well as people and as principals. Each has confided professional and personal problems and ambitions to me. It is easy to understand how some ethnographers have difficulty disengaging from their particular study locations.

Development of an Interview Guide

In describing qualitative research, Roberts and Burke (1989) say: "During the conduct of the study the design will evolve, taking direction from the results that are emerging from the data" (p. 168). I could say the same of my instrument development, which underwent one major change and several minor changes. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I initially intended that this study would be carried out in the quantitative, or scientific, mode. Therefore, my first attempt to develop an instrument was a questionnaire.

Stage one: Questionnaires. I gave my draft questionnaire (Attachment 1), for critical comment, to five graduate students who had had experience as principals in a variety of settings. All five commented favourably on the layout and content of the questionnaire and gave suggestions as to how it could be improved. At this stage, one of the participants in the trial said that he did not believe that a questionnaire was the most appropriate method for gathering the type of data I required. Based on the comments received, I revised the questionnaire (Attachment 2), but it was never administered.

I tried to analyse my colleagues' responses to the questions in the draft questionnaire. Apart from demographic data about their schools, the responses told me very little. Only the open-ended questions gave me any idea of how those people operated as principals. I had hoped to use a questionnaire to reach a large number of principals in a wide range of schools to give me all the data I wanted. My colleague was correct. A questionnaire was not the solution to my data-gathering problem.

Stage two: The first interview. My next effort to gather data was an interview with another graduate student who had also had considerable, recent experience as a principal. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) say that "while loosely-structured interview guides may sometimes be employed, most often the researcher is the only instrument, and works at getting the subjects to freely express their thoughts around particular topics" (p. 2). When I met with my informant in a quiet room far from her workplace, I followed a very simple interview guide and let the participant talk freely around the topics. To gather demographic data and to help her to relax, I initially asked the participant to describe her school. I then asked four other questions:

1. What jobs would you, as principal, do in the course of a normal week?
2. Could you group those jobs into categories?
3. What tasks, or categories of tasks, would you consider peculiar to your type of school?
4. What areas of decision making do you believe to be most relevant to your type of school?

I thought the interview had been very successful, as I gathered a significant amount of data. I believed that the location of the interview was good, as it allowed the principal to be detached from her daily routine. I did realise that I would need to have some ideas ready to prompt participants to speak about all the areas of their work. As principals do so many different jobs, it would be easy for them to talk about their work and forget to talk about a major area such as staff development. I decided that for my next interview I would need to prepare some topics about which they could speak.

The participant in this exercise had some difficulty clustering jobs into categories, and it seemed that this was too difficult to manage in an interview situation. The prompts mentioned above could provide those categories or themes.

Stage three: Observation and interview. An "observation and interview" assignment, unrelated to this thesis, in one of my courses led me to the conclusion that this was the way for me to collect my data. Observing a principal at work in her school made me much more aware of her in her work role and told me much more about her than would an interview in a neutral place. Walking around her school with her, I learned a great deal about her methods of operating, her expectations, and her relations with staff, students, and parents; and gained a "feel" for how she fitted into the whole picture at her school.

With each of the three participants in this study, the intiial chat and guided tour of the school--in each case offered and not requested--gave me the deographic data I needed to help identify specific environmental factors and broke any ice between participant and researcher.

Stage four: The final interview guide. Before commencing to gather data for this research, I read widely on the work of principals. As discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2, I found a multitude of tasks described. I settled on what I considered to be an appropriate list of 10 groups of tasks which later became, with minor adjustments, the themes in the data gathered. I asked the first participant, Amy, to tell me two things: (1) "Tell me about your work at Riverside," and (2) "Tell me what you think is different about your work because of specific environmental factors." In Amy's case those were elementary, suburban, small size, and high socio-economic and educational levels of parents.

To assist in answering question one, I had my 10 headings ready. They were instructional leader, staff developer, communicator, business manager, building manager, staff supervisor, parent liaison officer, student welfare leader, innovator, and high priestess. As with the other two participants, I did not have to use all the prompts with Amy. She covered some of them adequately without my assistance. Analysing the transcript of my interview with Amy, and later with Beryl and Craig, I made only minor alterations to those prompt topics to use as themes. Having been spoken about so fully, they were the only logical way in which the data could be broken down into manageable chunks. In the process of becoming themes, "building manager" became "facilities manager" to include busses, "parent liaison officer" became "public relations officer," and "student welfare leader" became "student developer" to better cater to the whole range of contacts between the principal and the students.

Interview guide for the group interview. As the group interview was held to give all participants the opportunity to confirm or reject things one or more had said, or what I had inferred from what was said, the interview guide (Attachment 4) for this exercise was much more directive. I wanted them to discuss specific topics which had been isolated as a result of the analysis of the transcripts of the individual interviews.

Having spent many hours interviewing and talking to the three participants individually and collectively, I have to concur with Gay's (1987) comments:

> The interview has a number of unique advantages and disadvantages. When well conducted it can produce in-depth data not possible with a questionnaire; on the other hand, it

> is expensive and time consuming, and generally involves smaller samples. The interview is most appropriate for asking questions which cannot effectively be structured into a multiple-choice format, such as questions of a personal nature. In contrast to the questionnaire, the interview is flexible; the interviewer can adapt the situation to each subject. By establishing rapport and a trust relationship, the interviewer can often obtain data that subjects would not give on a questionnaire. The interview may also result in more accurate and honest responses since the interviewer can explain and clarify both the purpose of the research and individual questions. Another advantage of the interview is that the interviewer can follow up on incomplete or unclear responses by asking additional probing questions. Reasons for particular responses can also be determined. (pp. 202-203)

Pilot Study

Gay (1987) states:

> Formal evaluation of a research plan involves a pilot study, which is a sort of dress rehearsal. In a pilot study the entire study is conducted, each and every procedure is followed, and the resulting data is analysed--all according to the research plan.

In this research I did not conduct a full pilot study. I contend that the processes which I followed in developing an instrument, as described fully in the preceding section of this chapter, prepared me for the major study. However, I was prepared to use my work with Amy as a pilot if any flaws were found after the data analysis stage. As none was discovered, Amy and her school were included in the major research effort.

Data Collection

The data collection proceeded in several stages as outlined in the following sections.

Getting to know principals and their schools. This stage varied with each of the participants. Those who recommended the three selected principals told me something about them. My first direct involvement with each was a telephone conversation, followed by an informal meeting. At that time, each principal took me on a conducted tour of her, or his, school. The further processes involved in getting to know principals are detailed in the succeeding three chapters dealing with the principals and their schools. During this time I recorded notes in a field notebook. The notes were brief and included all of the demographic information I would want to identify the environmentally specific factors which may have some effect on the principals' behaviours. When I felt that I knew the principals well enough and that they were comfortable with me, I moved on to stage two of the data-gathering process.

The individual interviews. Amy, Beryl, and Craig agreed that I could audiotape the individual interviews which were conducted in their respective offices. I used a micro-cassette recorder fitted with batteries which I recharged after several hours' use, thus ensuring a good recording of each interview.

It is argued that transcribing tapes personally is a real advantage to the researcher in that it helps familiarise oneself with the material. My one brief effort at transcribing--three hours to manually transcribe 10 minutes of an interview--convinced me that such was not the case for me. I do not type and do not have immediate access to a word processor. Therefore, I decided that it was not worth my while to learn to type for this exercise. I was fortunate that I had a very proficient typist who had access to a transcriber with foot controls.

I have already intimated that the interviews were recorded in total. The only changes made by the typist in the initial transcripts were to eliminate a few of the repetitions and redundancies. During further work with the transcripts I cut out further redundancies, improved some of the grammar, and altered some sentence constructions. The only changes to the draft chapters requested by principals were to improve grammar. The quotations used in later chapters still contain many grammatical weaknesses and errors. However, I did not change anything if I considered that to do so would change the meaning or intent of the speaker, even if in a very minor way. I felt that not to use the participants' words in their own way would not only alter meaning, but also detract from feelings which the reader can gain from the spoken word. Few people speak correctly all the time. Particular idiosyncrasies in speech are basic to the way other people see and feel about the speaker.

I became very familiar with the data by listening to the tapes and reading the transcripts, concurrently on at least three occasions, over a period of several weeks. I was able to fill in most of the few gaps where the typist had been unable to decipher what had been said. I also added some exclamations which I remembered and which gave deeper meaning to the transcripts. By the time I started to write I knew the data so well that on several occasions I remembered something that someone had said which was more salient to the section I was writing than any segment that I had cut up and filed. I was able to go back to the original transcript and find the wanted segment very quickly.

Roberts and Burke (1989) said: "Qualitative designs usually deal with ideas that are collected and analyzed in the form of words" (p. 167). I collected approximately 200 pages of words, 150 pages of transcript, and 50 pages of field notes. Describing how the interviews proceeded is much more difficult than describing the mechanics of recording and transcribing. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) and Field and Morse (1985) describe well how the data collection and data analysis go ahead step by step and sometimes side by side. As Gay (1987), quoted earlier, said, the interview provides the opportunity to probe and to go deeper and wider in search of relevant data. Probing infers that some analysis has occurred in the researcher's mind, even if it is only "He didn't understand my question," or "What did she really mean by that?" or "That's important; I'd better follow that up for a while." Field and Morse said:

> As previously mentioned, the qualitative approach to understanding, explaining and developing theory is inductive. This means that hypotheses and theories emerge from the data set while the data collection is in progress, and after data analysis has commenced. The researcher examines the data for descriptions, patterns, and hypothesized relationships between phenomena, then returns to the setting to collect data to test the hypotheses. Thus, the research is a *process* that builds theory inductively over a period of time, step by step. The theory fits the research setting and is relevant for that point in time only. These data may largely consist of transcriptions of interviews, observations of the setting and of the actors. Data of these kinds are meaningful to others, and considered 'rich' and 'deep.' However, these data are hard to manage for the purposes of analyzing and writing a report, as they can not be readily transformed into numeric codes for statistical manipulation. In this respect they are often said to be 'soft' data. (p. 11)

In describing a *snowball sampling technique*, Bogdan and Biklen aptly describe a similar process through a hypothetical case. They imply that the questioning and probing on the second and subsequent interviews will not be precisely as they were for the first.

> From that initial interview and observation, Jonah Glenn develops a loose descriptive theory of teacher effectiveness. It consists of a career-stage model in which effectiveness is defined differently at various periods in the teacher's career. The problems faced, and decisions made about how to meet them are included in the theory. It also integrates the teacher's personal life with her professional life to explain effectiveness. Particular aspects of schools and the teacher's

> relationships with others are also included. The theory consists of propositional statements and a diagram of career and career contingencies as they relate to effectiveness. In addition, his formulation defines effectiveness and explains its dimensions. After Jonah has sketched out his theory, he picks a second teacher to interview. In picking the first few teachers, Jonah used the *snowball sampling technique*; that is, he asked the first person he interviewed to recommend others. He interviewed the second in a similar open-ended manner, withholding the theory he developed on the basis of his first interview.
>
> After the second interview, Jonah rewrites and modifies the theory to fit the new case. He continues choosing and interviewing new people, modifying the theory to fit each new case. (p. 66)

As soon as I had the tapes transcribed I listened to them twice while I read the transcripts, made a few alterations, and filled in what blanks I could. I also noted matters on which I wanted clarification or further information. I then took the relevant transcripts back to the participants and left them with them for a few days. Later I returned for follow-up interviews. Acting on any advice given and requests made when I took them their transcripts, participants were able to confirm that the transcripts were accurate records of the interviews, clarify issues as requested, fill in a few more of the gaps, and add further information. Amy and Beryl did not have much to add, so I relied on my field notes and annotations on the transcripts. As Craig had significant additional points to make and/or clarify, I recorded our second interview and had it transcribed.

The group interview. As soon as I had roughly analysed the data gathered from each person, I prepared the interview guide and organised for the group interview to be held at Beryl's school. This interview, which lasted for nearly two hours, was also recorded and transcribed.

Beryl and Amy had known each other for some years, but neither knew Craig. This was no hindrance to the conduct of the interview, and by the end of the two hours we were almost like a group of old friends.

Once I had analysed all the data, I took the draft of the chapters concerning them and their respective schools and the draft of Chapters 7 and 8 to the principals. Each agreed to read the three chapters and to confirm what I had written as an accurate report of them, their schools, and their actions and ideas. It also gave them an opportunity to ensure that I had maintained anonymity as agreed. I returned to the schools to discuss any changes that the principals wanted made. As mentioned earlier, these were all related to grammar and sentence structure.

This completed my formal contact with Amy, Beryl, and Craig.

Coding the data. As described earlier, the themes seemed to follow the 10 prompt headings naturally. I have discussed in a later chapter how there appeared to be three overarching themes: students at the centre of all principals' work, rich communication systems, and all threads coming together at budget time. I found these three themes too simplistic to describe accurately. Writing about them would have meant discussing virtually every aspect of the principals' tasks three times. The 10 themes chosen seemed a more appropriate way to tackle the data analysis, and I believe that that proved to be the case. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) describe a theme thus:

> A *theme* can also serve as a focus. It lacks the overtly argumentative tone of the thesis, although it shares some of the "big idea" quality. A theme is some concept or theory that emerges from your data: "some signal trend, some *master* conception, or key distinction" (Mills, 1959, p. 216). Themes can be formulated at different levels of abstraction from statements about particular kinds of settings to universal statements about human beings, their behavior, and situations (Spradley, 1980). (p. 173)

In my case, as just described, the themes could probably be attributed to my prompt headings, which directed the data and became the "big ideas."

One approach to sorting data is described by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) as:

> *The Cut-Up-and-Put-in-Folders Approach*. One approach to handling the data after this point is to take a scissors and cut up the notes so that the units of data can be placed in manila folders which have each been labeled with one code. (p. 173)

As described in earlier sections, informal analysis commenced as soon as someone started to tell me about the principals and their schools when they were first recommended to me. The informal analysis continued through all meetings and interviews, with some thoughts included in the field notes. I began formal analysis with data gathered from Amy at Riverside. I had made several copies of the transcript to ensure that I had two copies to cut up and one which I could keep intact. I went through the transcript of my interview with Amy three times for the purpose of coding. Using 10 different-coloured highlighters, I marked passages salient to each of the 10 themes in different colours. Some passages were marked with several colours and have, in fact, ended up in more than one section of this report.

I also indicated sections which described the school, many of those sections coming from field notes, and segments which seemed to make Amy's school different from the "average" school. I drew a black line down the right-hand side of the page to indicate Amy's transcript. I then labelled 12 large envelopes with one theme each, one labelled "The School" and one labelled "Differences." As I cut out each segment I indicated the page number on it and put it into the first envelope with which it was aligned, treating "School" as number one and then the 10 themes in sequential order. My next step was to tackle the envelopes sequentially. I then went through the "School" envelope, listed the comments briefly on a fresh sheet of paper, and divided them into categories, keeping categories to a minimum. Where I was uncertain whether a new category should be made, I did not make one. Any pieces which were marked for two or more of the themes were then put into the next envelope to which they belonged. I continued on through the envelopes until I had 12 sets of notes on Amy's school, Riverside.

When I came to analyse data for Beryl and Craig, I followed the same process, using a new set of envelopes for each participant. I identified Beryl's transcripts with a red line down the right-hand side of the page, Craig's first interview with a green line down the side, and Craig's second interiew with two green lines.

> Try to develop a coding system with a limited number of codes, say thirty to fifty. The codes should encompass topics for which you have most substantiation as well as topics you want to explore. Play with different coding possibilities. After you have drawn up a new list, test them again. Speculate about what the new scheme suggests for writing possibilities. You might even try to outline a paper with the coding categories as topics or sections and see if they work for you. You may experience indecision at this point. The data you have might be thin around your interests. Reformulate in light of what you have; you may come up with a list of codes that is extremely long. Try to cut that down. If you have over fifty categories, they probably overlap. While it is difficult to throw away data or categories, analysis is a process of data reduction. Decisions to limit codes are imperative. And at some point--preferably about now in the analytic process--your codes should become fixed, at least for this research project. (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 166)

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggest that between 30 and 50 categories should be sufficient to deal with. I ended up with 36, 9 dealing with environmental factors and 27 encompassing the principals' tasks. Twenty-three of those 27 categories were used to analyse data from Riverside. I was able to use most of them for Beryl and Craig and added only four more to handle data from them.

The transcript from the group interview was treated in a similar manner, the right-hand side left blank for identification. Being a much more directed interview, its transcript tended to have large slabs of the same colour with fewer overlaps than occurred with the individual interviews.

Once I had finished the draft of Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I decided that I had to re-sort my data to enable me to write the next two chapters. This time I had two envelopes for each theme, one on similarities and one on differences. Cut-cut data from all sources were placed in the appropriate envelopes. I then went through the "Similarities" envelopes, as I had with each principal separately, and drafted Chapter 7. Finally, I went through the "Differences" envelopes and drafted Chapter 8.

Data analysis. I have described already how I was analysing data throughout the whole process. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) describe well that process that I went through:

> *Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively.* They do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses they hold before entering the study; rather, the abstractions are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together.
>
> Theory developed this way emerges from the bottom up (rather than from the top down), from many disparate pieces of collected evidence that are interconnected. It is called *grounded theory* (Glaset and Strauss, 1967). As a qualitative researcher planning to develop some kind of theory about what you have been studying, the direction you will travel comes after you have been collecting the data, after you have spent time with your subjects. You are not putting together a puzzle, whose picture you already know. You are constructing a picture which takes shape as you collect and examine the parts. The process of data analysis is like a funnel: things are open at the beginning (or top), and more directed and specific at the bottom. The qualitative researcher plans to use part of the study to learn what the important questions are. He or she does not assume that enough is known to recognize important concerns before undertaking the research. (p. 29)

And again they said:

> As we have suggested, designs of all qualitative studies involve the combination of data collection with analysis. This is clear in the modified version of analytic induction we presented. Analysis and data collection occurred in a pulsating fashion--first the interview, then the analysis and theory development, another interview, and then more analysis, and so on--until the research is completed. In most forms of case studies, the emerging themes guide data collection, but formal analysis and theory development does not occur until after the data collection is near completion. The constant comparative method is a research design for multi-data sources, which is like analytic induction in that the formal analysis begins early in the study and is nearly completed by the end of data collection. As you will see in our discussion, the constant comparative method differs from analytic induction in a number of respects. (p. 68)

Field and Morse (1985) stated that "in qualitative, inductive research, the researcher examines the data for patterns and relationships, and then develops and tests hypotheses to generate theory or uses developed theories to explain the data" (p. 2). In simple terms, that describes the process I went through in writing Chapters 7 and 8 on similarities and differences. Patterns and relationships were identified as I proceeded. Hypotheses were devleoped and tested at subsequent meetings and interviews. Theories have been postulated and implications, based on those theories, outlined. Although I have conducted a literature search to support theories put forward, I emphasise that they are based on the study of only three principals. Much more extensive research is required before any of them can be really verified and used to assist in the training of principals.

Implications. Lolas (1986) supports the notion that analysis of data should be extended to making inferences: "It should be stressed that content analysis is a research technique for making inferences. It does go beyond mere description, as the equivalence between *coding* and content analysis might suggest" (p. 22). Roberts and Burke (1989) agree and go further to suggest more applied testing of "knowledge" gained before theory developed becomes a basis for change in practice: "Basic research conducted in clinical settings may have implications for practice in that it contributes knowledge to help you examine existing practice, but it requires more applied testing before it can become a basis for change in practice" (p. 57).

Trustworthiness.

> I cannot see my eyes "seeing" but I can hear my voice "speaking." To a certain extent, communication, that is, the *intentional* operation of sending and receiving messages, is possible by this monitorization of their emission and reception and is more developed in this than in any other channel [8]. This does not tell us whether the message is true or not, but even when it deceives, speech seems to be closer to subjectivity than other behaviors. As the locus of intersubjectivity, language behavior not only permits inferences about individuals, it also shows the societal dimensions of mind by relating inner experience to overt behavior. (Lolas, 1986, p. 18)

In the above quotation, Lolas implies that analysing of data based on the spoken word is one test of trustworthiness. Most of my data was so based. I can relate steps I took to ensure trustworthiness of data to the following quotation from Field and Morse (1985):

> The social context under which the data are gathered is an important consideraton in establishing reliability and validity of data. Informants will reveal certain information in one context and not in another. Information may be obtained in individual or in group situations. Becker and Geer (1978) suggest that information given in one-to-one situations should be verified with information presented by informants in group situations. In all studies it is useful to verify data with information from several sources. As previously mentioned, Zelditch (1969) and Jick (1979) refer to this as triangulation of data. If one can demonstrate commonality of behaviour across data gathered in different ways the validity of the information is increased.
>
> Homans (1955) outlines six variables that he suggests should be used to evaluate the adequacy of a qualitative study. These are time, place, social circumstance, language, intimacy

> and consensus. These relate both to the conditions under which the data were gathered and the homogeneity amongst the information gained from individual informants. In discussing the criterion of time Homans notes that the observer must spend sufficient time in the setting to enable adequate contacts to be made and to establish rapport with informants.
>
> The criterion of place refers to the fact that the closer the researcher is to the people he studies the more accurate will be his interpretation of the situation. However, care must be exercised in that the researcher must avoid becoming so much a part of the group that objectivity is lost. The criterion of social circumstance is discussed later and refers to the variety of reported situations in which the behaviour is observed.
>
> The fourth criterion of language maintains that the more familiar the observer is with the language of the participants the greater the accuracy of the interpretations. Similarly, the greater the degree of intimacy that the observer establishes with the informants the more accurate will be the observations until the researcher reaches the stage of 'going native,' which again results in a loss of objectivity. The final criterion is that of consensus, the more the observer confirms the expressed meaning of the informants with other informants the greater the accuracy of the interpretations. (pp. 117-118)

1. I spoke to each participant separately, several times, and together as a group.
2. At individual meetings I related what other participants had said and asked for comment.
3. I went back to participants to get them to verify what I had recorded of what they had said and what I had inferred from what they had said.
4. I have discussed the data with several graduate student colleagues, who agree with inferences I have made.

I believe that I fulfil the six criteria listed by Homans, as quoted by Field and Morse (pp. 117-118).

1. I have spent sufficient time with the participants to check and triangulate.
2. Most of the data was gathered at the place where the principals work.

3. Meeting in the work place, together at Beryl's school, and socially covers a variety of situations in which participants were observed and fulfils the criterion of social circumstance.
4. With considerable experience as an elementary school principal and working with other principals, I was able to speak and understand the language of the participants.
5. I was able to develop a suitable level of intimacy without "going native." Participants seemed to enjoy discussing their work with a neutral (foreign) outsider who understood their work.
6. I was able to achieve consensus at the group interview.

Generalizability. Although I have generated grounded theory from the data gathered and translated the theory into implications, I emphasize again that much further research should be carried out in a wide range of schools before "generalizability" is assumed. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) state:

> If you are conducting additional data collection to show generalizability or diversity, your concern should be picking additional sites that will illustrate the range of settings or subjects to which your original observation might be applicable. If you are doing a second case study to compare and contrast, you pick a second site on the basis of the extent, presence, or absence of some particular characteristic of the original study. (p. 65)

Ethical considerations. As the principals were talking about the general types of jobs they did, few really confidential matters arose during the recorded interviews, although considerably more confidential topics were relayed later, "off tape." Confidential data were used only to colour the researcher's views of the situations and were not reported in any form. Participants were advised prior to and at all stages during the data-gathering process that they could opt out at any time or refuse to answer any question. At no stage did any principal opt out or refuse to answer a question. One principal asked me not to comment on one matter which came up after an interview. The issue was raised "off tape" several times later but has not been reported. Even though it has considerable bearing on how that principal operates, it does not affect the range of tasks which have to be performed.

Amy, Beryl, and Craig were assured that they and their schools would remain anonymous. Therefore, names used in the thesis are pseudonyms, and an effort has been made to change any data which may identify people or places. That has been done without changing the thrust or meaning of any quotation.

I assured participants that field notes, tapes, and transcripts would be destroyed when this study was completed.

Chapter 4

Amy's School, Riverside

Getting to Know Amy and Her School

Amy was recommended to me as an effective principal by two of her colleagues, faculty members who knew her because of her co-operation with previous students, and students who knew of her by reputation. As part of a purposive sample I chose Amy because her school was easy to classify as a small elementary school in a high S.E.S. suburban community. I first contacted her by telephone, saying that she had been recommended by one of her colleagues with whom she had worked closely for a number of years. I asked to meet with her to discuss the possibility of co-operating with me for an Observation and Interview Assignment during one of my courses.

At our initial meeting mutual respect and agreement were established. I was taken on a tour of the school, met many staff and students, and arranged a time to observe Amy at work and then interview her on things that I had observed.

For this research I chose to work with three elementary school principals to reduce the number of differences between the schools which they would represent and to allow me to spend sufficient time with each to build up a thick description of their schools and the tasks they perform. Because of my previous contact with Amy I was assured of her effectiveness as a principal. Therefore, Amy was the first principal who I selected as a participant in my thesis research. Fortunately, she readily agreed to co-operate with my study.

To ensure that data collected were as accurate as possible, I decided that it would be in four stages. The first stage, which could, and did, vary with each participant, was to get to know the principals and their schools. In Amy's case, that stage had already taken place. The bulk of the demographic data was gathered at my initial meeting with Amy and on my subsequent tour of Riverside School with her. Some notes were taken at this stage on the nature of the school. Further data on Amy's work and Riverside School were gathered during the observation and interview which followed a week after our initial meeting. During the hour's observation field notes were written, and interview questions were based on those notes.

The second stage was a further interview with Amy which was recorded and transcribed and used as the major source of data. This stage also included taking the transcript to Amy, leaving it with her, and meeting with her later to seek verification of the content of the transcript, clarification of any point, and any further information which she might consider salient.

The third stage was a joint interview with the three participants. Its aims were to seek confirmation of similarities and differences between schools, either stated by one or more principals or inferred from their statements. Several telephone contacts were also made with Amy to arrange meeting times. However, each call was also used to clarify particular points or to seek further information.

The fourth and final stage of my involvement with Amy was to take her a copy of the draft of this chapter and of the two chapters dealing with the themes. She has agreed that I have portrayed an accurate view of her school, her work, and her ideas. In all, I have met Amy on nine occasions. When her time to read what I had written about her, and telephone conversations, are taken into consideration, Amy must have spent a total of about four working days on this research. I think she enjoyed talking about her school and her work as much as I appreciated her enthusiastic co-operation.

The School

Size

I classified Riverside Elementary School as a small school on the grounds that the principal, Amy, teaches part time. All participants agreed that having either a teaching or nonteaching principal is an appropriate way to differentiate between small and large schools. Riverside has an enrolment of less than 200 children in Grades Kindergarten through Six and coming from some 130 families.

Setting

Riverside Elementary is in an affluent suburb close to the centre of a large city in Alberta.

Enrolment Level

Like one other school in this study, Riverside is not filled to design capacity by children who live in its official catchment area. Space is leased to a day-care centre catering for children of preschool age, the majority being children of university academic staff and who will be enrolled at Riverside when they commence school. More than 50% of students at Riverside are brought in daily by their parents. Many are in before- and after-school care located across the road from the school.

Socio-Economic and Educational Levels of Parents

There are a number of indicators which lead me to assert that students at Riverside come from families with high socio-economic and educational levels. To start, real estate values in the area are among the highest in the city. Amy commented that about 95% of the children come from homes with two professional parents, the majority of whom are on the professional staff at the nearby university. Riverside students reflect that educational level. More than 10% of the students have been officially identified as gifted. A recent (1989) standardised test administered to Grade Six students indicated an average intelligence quotient of over 120, compared with a system average of 106. In addition, Riverside students almost always place their school among the top five schools in system tests and above average in provincial tests.

Amy said that her students present very few academic or welfare problems. She said that

> the children are brought up with good manners and [the ability to] deal with a cross-section of people. . . . Their basic needs are met: We don't have to worry about food, clothing, or shelter. In a lot of instances their emotional and social needs are more than met: Sometimes children are overinvolved and overindulged, and I guess that can be a problem.

In clarification of the final part of that statement, Amy indicated that the majority of parents have their children involved in a wide range of programmed social and cultural activities out of school hours. Many of the students have their own personal computers, videorecorders, stereo systems, and the like. Some children may be pressured by high expectations from home.

Parents Able to Cope

Amy made an interesting observation related to how the high socio-economic and educational levels of parents have another effect on children. She stated that although many children come from broken homes, their biological parents are generally able to come together with their children for parent interviews and other special school occasions. Amy believes that this is because they have the intellectual and financial resources and personal contacts and resources to handle marriage breakdown with minimum hurt to their children.

Part-Time Teachers

Four members of staff are part-time teachers.

Summary

I contend that Riverside is a small, suburban, elementary school whose students come from families with high socio-economic and educational levels. Enrolment from the school's immediate locality is more than 50% less than its design capacity. There is a significant percentage of part-time teachers on the staff.

Amy's Work

Instructional Leader

Being an exemplary elementary school teacher herself, Amy has an excellent knowledge of most areas of the curriculum. She professes to particular strengths in language arts and a weakness in French. She delegates leadership in some curriculum areas to staff with particular strengths and interests in specific areas.

Knowledge of children. Amy stressed that it is important for principals to know children well so that they can ensure that programs match children's needs. Not only does Amy teach a group of children regularly, but she also visits every class every day to get to know children's educational abilities. She has a thorough knowledge of provincial and district test results. In addition, she knows all children in her school, their family situations, and the programmed activities which fill their out-of-school hours. Amy said,

> I'm very supportive of what they [the teachers] do in the classroom, and being specific to Riverside is that if we taught the basic program of studies as outlined by Alberta Education at this school, we'd be in trouble, because our kids are in a lot of ways very gifted children, not necessarily all the time academically, although a lot of it is, but we have some very talented children in music, in theatre, and the teachers have been very attentive to their needs, and they've enriched programs. . . . My teachers are the professionals, and when it comes to school organisation and planning for learning, we do the best we can with the knowledge we have of the children.

Amy's personal leadership. "I'm very strong in the language arts area and we've come a long way." This statement by Amy supports the notion that principals, especially in small schools, should provide some educational leadership personally. Most principals have been seen as superior teachers at some time and have special expertise in particular curriculum areas. It is right, then, that they should exercise those skills in their own schools as far as their other duties allow.

Further, teaching principals such as Amy can demonstrate their teaching skills and provide role models for their staffs. Amy said, "In lots of ways, I probably have more credibility with my teachers as a teaching principal . . . because I'm still in the trenches."

However, it behooves effective principals to keep abreast of curriculum trends. Amy claims that her school district provides the mechanisms necessary for principals to keep up with current curriculum developments. "They inservice principals as to what is expected: What resources are expected? How do you observe the qualities of a good music [or other] program? In terms of curriculum leadership I can be supportive."

Delegation of instructional leadership. Effective principals are not threatened by capable staff members. The appropriate use of staff expertise has many spinoffs which work towards the provision of superior programs for students. Principals, even if they have the expertise, do not have the time to provide in-depth leadership in all subject areas. Students benefit if individual staff members with specific strengths and interests agree to take on leadership roles in those areas. Additionally, such delegation provides staff with leadership experience and can enhance feelings of self-worth which, in turn, usually enhances performance as a class teacher.

At Riverside, delegation is practised effectively.

> Every teacher has a key responsibility for a subject in this school. . . . my Grade Three teacher is very strong in social studies. She's done curriculum development in social studies, so when I'm finished reading through some stuff in social studies I'll put it in her mailbox, and she'll promote it. She's the key person. My Grade Four teacher is very strong on computers. I will route everything on computers after I read it through to him. Grade Six, Betty is very strong in science and math., in fact, runs a whole program based on animals in her room, so she's the leader in that area. And it's quite co-operative. For instance, the children have a Science Fair in April, and we try to do it as a home project, with very little help from school, an independent study project. But Betty and I will collaborate on what's happening and discuss it.

In her last sentence, Amy indicates that she, an effective principal, collaborates with her subject specialists. This is important for principals who wish to maintain a good knowledge of curriculum practices and developments in their schools. From what she has said it can also be inferred that Amy has worked to discover staff strengths, used them effectively, and still retained her grip on the situation as principal.

Staff Developer

Amy plays an active role in the professional growth of her staff. As will be seen throughout this section, staff development is very closely aligned with other aspects of a principal's work. In Amy's case it intertwines with staff supervision, business management, innovation, communication, and educational leadership.

"Our staff development is very formalised," asserted Amy. However, I infer from what she said throughout our meetings that a considerable amount of informal staff development also occurs.

Informal programs. I believe that looking at the informal staff development fostered by Amy at Riverside gives us a good insight into their effective formal staff development plans.

It is probably appropriate to look first at the teachers' knowledge of their students' needs. At budget time, staff decide on priorities in curriculum areas and then plan their staff development activities in line with the school's priorities.

It is also difficult to separate staff development from staff supervision in some cases. At Riverside, Amy stipulates the types of lessons which she intends to observe as part of the formal teacher evaluation process. Over a short period of time she will observe all teachers teaching in a particular subject area. Such observation can provide the basis for recommending inservice to particular teachers and/or for whole-staff activities. Communication between staff and their colleagues and staff and Amy is an essential element in planning appropriate staff development. Formal and informal networks exist at Riverside for effective communication to take place.

Formal programs. Of the three substitute days allowed in the budget for each teacher, Amy has "already made it clear to teachers that next year as part of their professional growth, . . . [she] will expect them to attend at least one inservice in the new social studies area before it becomes mandatory in 1990." This shows that Amy is taking system-wide priorities into account in her school plan. It also allows teachers the flexibility to use the other two days as they deem appropriate within school priorities. It would seem logical, then, that children will benefit from such a team approach to professional growth. Amy said:

> This year, in looking at the way our goals and objectives went, and I was talking to you about the math., what is going to be expected is, we don't only have a school priority and an action plan, but each classroom teacher will now have to have a personal- professional development plan that reflects the emphasis on this action plan. And I think it'll be a more meaningful document because the personal-professional development plan will be reflected in their performance appraisal. So it's sort of coming together for me.

The school district has planned inservice courses to meet teachers' needs with regards to curriculum developments at the provincial level.

Riverside has further formal professional development at the school level. Amy arranged her timetable to allow for a staff development meeting once every two weeks. These meetings provide an opportunity for subject leaders to report to the whole staff or provide a mini inservice, staff discussion on particular curriculum areas, or for an outside expert to work with the staff.

Communicator

In speaking with Amy it becomes obvious that communication is the linchpin which holds the strands of her school together effectively. Her formal and informal networks provide a wealth of information to her on her staff, students, parents, and community. They also convey her ideas and aspirations to her total community and allow for a free flow of information in all directions at all levels.

Her informal discussions with children in the corridors, staff in the staff room, and parents and community members whenever she comes across them provide a firm basis for her getting to know her total community and vice versa. She says, "I'm a listener" and asserts that this gives staff the confidence to approach her with their problems. Her secretary said, "What a woman! She always does what she says she'll do." This provides further encouragement for effective communication.

During my visits to Riverside and my discussions with Amy I observed examples of effective communication in a host of areas.

Visual communication. Clean and tidy grounds and buildings, an attractive office, good displays of children's work, and a bright, cheerful personality all help to convey Amy's pride in her school to anyone who visits Riverside. This visual communication of her ideals and standards assists Amy in maintaining her effectiveness.

Oral communication. As mentioned earlier, oral communication is effectively encouraged by Amy. She makes an effort to greet children as they enter the building. Those efforts are reciprocated. She frequently speaks with staff informally and formally. Her daily visits to classrooms and the staff room ensure adequate opportunities for this to occur. She elicits staff input into, and discussion on, curriculum priorities, staff development needs, business matters, student affairs, and, in fact, in all aspects of running the school, as well as showing interest in teachers' personal and professional lives. Amy maintains an open-door policy with parents, constrained only by her teaching schedule. She says that although the parents are busy, professional people, they also have the work flexibility to be able to come to the school to discuss school-related issues as they desire. They also have the ability and confidence to express their thoughts and feelings openly and effectively.

The very open, verbal communication encouraged in the school can present problems for some teachers, as illustrated by the following example:

> One time I had a supply teacher, a substitute teacher, in the school. She was only here one day and wouldn't come back. I thought she was good, because we had had her at another school. I met her at the shopping mall, and I asked her why she wouldn't come back to our school. She said, "Those Riverside kids are sassy. They're always asking questions." I thought about it and, yes, they are, but they're genuinely curious, and you have to be able to tolerate that. So, as a rule, when we have substitute teachers that we haven't had in this school before we try to greet them and talk to them and tell them that these are the kinds of kids you're up against, and they're not being malicious; they're just curious, and they have a lot of questions.

The above example is proof to me that Amy's efforts to foster rich, verbal communication are well rewarded.

Written communication. The rich, verbal communication flowing around Amy is matched by a wealth of written communication. After viewing particularly good work in a classroom, Amy will write out a merit certificate, appropriately worded, and affix it to the classroom door. She helps teachers write notes home regarding specific school matters and contributes regularly to a newsletter to parents. A significant aspect of Riverside is the fact that the Home and School Association produces a newsletter, and so does the school.

I can best illustrate the types of communication at Riverside by offering two quotations from Amy:

> But in terms of parents here, I spend a lot of time with the School Council on parent awareness sessions. I send home articles in newsletters on various theories and education approaches to teaching, ways to help your children. We've had Parent Forum nights, so they want awareness of what is going on in education. We still have, even though they're well educated people, some people have been through the system, and they think they know the system, but the analogy of "Do you still drive a 1955 Ford today? You know, times have changed as well in education, and we aren't using the Dick and Jane readers like we did." So there's a lot of time spent in educating parents . . . . at the last parent forum we had representation from forty of our hundred and thirty families.
>
> For the last two years a highlight has been that the Home and School has put out a newsletter called Parent to Parent, and they've highlighted staff, through staff profiles. They've encouraged parents to become involved in various programs for parents that are offered after school here and by our Centre for Education. They've had question-answer things in that newsletter: What is extended French? for instance, in the newsletter. The parents will come and interview one of the teachers, and the response is printed in the letter. So it's a good communication letter for parents. So that's the parent end of it.

Business Manager

> I love having the financial freedom of handling my own budget, because we fill in what our school needs. Nobody's telling us what we need; we decide. . . . I have all my staff involved. We meet, and I use a collaborative process. Basically, to start with, I look at it as a V, and we start at the open end of the V, where we're in mixed groups, and we generally look at what the school needs in more global areas. We list those needs, and then I have them switch groups so that the Primary groups together, and the Upper Elementary is together, and all the additional support, like the Library, Resource Room, those kinds of supports. What are the needs in those areas? Then we usually take a break so that they could talk about it in an informal situation, and then we go back and put those needs in priority and start negotiating. Everybody feels very involved, that they've had a say and they understand.

Amy obviously enjoys the role of business manager and appears successful in this area. The above quotation shows how staff are heavily involved in the budget process. She further says, "We match the dollars, then, with the priorities, but the priorities come first." This indicates clearly to me that she insists that the budget is curriculum driven and not the reverse.

As may not be the case in large schools, Amy is involved in searching through catalogues for most appropriate materials, discussing ordering with her secretary, and signing order forms. Amy also liaises with the day-care centre people to purchase items designed for joint use.

Facilities Manager

Building management is not a time-consuming aspect of Amy's work, nor is it one she enjoys: "Building Manager, oh, that's the part I hate the most about my job. . . . I'm getting better; it takes practice. But I've reconciled with myself the fact that this school is not going to look like my house looks." This quotation refers specifically to building maintenance and the like. Amy organises the contracts with the day-care centre and schedules use of the facilities: "In terms of scheduling space around the school, in a small school it's easy; rescheduling seven classes is a picnic. I certainly don't need a computer program to do that."

This aspect of the principal's work at Riverside scarcely deserves reporting. However, in large high schools or in remote localities where principals may be responsible for teacher accommodation, or where facilities are old and inadequate, building management could present real problems for principals.

Staff Supervisor

The heading "Staff Supervisor" is used somewhat loosely for this section. However, I contend that the whole area of staffing as discussed with Amy is extremely important to the effective school and is, therefore, deserving of attention.

Assessment of staffing requirements. I was present when Amy placed on her staff meeting agenda an item requesting teachers to place on record their intentions for the next school year. This was used as a basis for judging Riverside's needs for 1989-90. Further, I heard her discussing some staffing matters with her Personnel Officer. There were a couple of teachers on the school's staff list but on extended leave, and their futures had to be decided. I noted that Amy had developed the sort of relationship with the Personnel Officer that would ensure she received that person's utmost co-operation.

Recruitment. Amy takes the recruitment of new staff very seriously. "When I interview them I try to find out if their philosophy fits the Riverside philosophy." Again, other staff are included in selection of new staff.

> When I'm interviewing for any position on staff, I like to have another staff member with me. If it's specifically for the French area, I ask one of the French teachers to sit with me and do some of the interview in the French language.

In such a situation, Amy also asks one of the French advisory staff to check the applicant's language proficiency. French is not one of her own strengths.

Informal supervision. Amy provided many examples where informal supervision of staff can occur. This happens frequently in conjunction with instructional leadership and staff development as alluded to in previous sections dealing with Riverside.

She has prescribed that as part of their next year's professional development plan, teachers will be involved in a social studies inservice course, and she will work with them to produce their "personal-professional development plan[s which] will be reflected in their performance appraisal." With regard to teachers' correspondence with parents, Amy says:

> Often I'll write the letters, but I get them [the teachers in charge] to sign their names to them as key people, and they feel like they're supporting in the programs. I like that sharing of responsibility: I don't have any desire to have my name in lights or anything.

On the surface this may not look like supervision but, in fact, is an important aspect of seeing that jobs get done properly, empowering staff to build concepts of self-worth, and enhancing school effectiveness.

As mentioned previously, Amy further empowers staff through delegation of elements of educational leadership. Through discussion with co-ordinators and in staff discussions, Amy exercises her responsibility for ensuring high standards.

High standards in her own teaching also set a role model which staff can emulate. Again, I see this as a form of staff supervision. What the effective teacher/principal is implicitly saying to staff is, "This is what I expect from myself, and I expect the same from you." Amy says,

> They see me struggle with students; they see me talk about students one to one when I'm talking about students I'm working with from their classroom. I can empathise with what was going on in the classroom. But my expectations are high of the teachers to help these kids as well, and I'm constantly checking on them [the students], and I think they're [the teachers] open enough not to feel a paranoia about me asking about children, but it's that I do have a genuine concern for helping them.

Further, Amy believes "that gives you more credibility with your teachers, because you're on the front line, too, working with students. At least I felt working with a class is more credible."

Amy also commented on one of the even more intangible aspects of staff supervision. She believes that the cohesiveness possible to attain with a small staff in a small school assists in boosting staff effort and effectiveness.

Formal supervision. I contend that Amy's formal supervision is best described in her own words:

> In terms of evaluation, too, I had a very, very formal performance appraisal for my teachers. I had them fill out a pre-observation sheet, I had them hand in a lesson plan, and then I went in to do a formal observation. I did a formal write-up for each one--I still do it for new teachers--and then we had a verbal conference. . . . In the end everybody gets something written. I cursed every time I came back to my office and saw one of these pre-observation sheets in my office. Inevitably it was a math lesson. I mean, how could you go wrong? So I changed that; I changed my observation procedure with teachers. What I do is, I take the timetable now, and for one month I tell them I'm going to be coming in to observe only language arts: "At this time on Monday I'll be in the Grade Three classroom. At this time on Tuesday I'll be in the Grade One," and whatever, "and I'm going to be observing you in language arts." I don't have them give me a lesson plan ahead of time or anything. I go in there, and I try to be involved in the lesson, because I found out that I could read more about that teacher from what a child was doing than I could from the lesson plan that they were giving me. They still do that, but they give it to me there, but then I have both, and it's not so structured. And it seems to work better for me and the teachers here. But those math lessons used to get me! So in terms of evaluation, I think, in believing in the uniqueness of each person, whether it be student or teacher.

Public Relations Officer

It was obvious to me from my observations and from what Amy told me that she has intensive interaction with parents and other community members.

Parental responsibilities. Amy believes that the school should not take over matters that she considers parent responsibilities. However, she ensures that action is initiated where she sees a problem. Earlier it was mentioned that she believes some children may be overinvolved in programmed activities outside school hours. Where Amy thinks that is occurring, she will discuss the matter with parents.

Riverside's discipline policy relies heavily on parent co-operation to solve problems. Two quotations best explain the situation from Amy's point of view:

> In my career as an administrator there was only one time that a parent hauled in a child and asked the child to be strapped. I said I would not do it. The child was with them. Because I felt that very often parental responsibility is shifting onto the school, that they have to learn to deal with it. I would not hit a child, because I don't like hitting people. . . . The second reason is, I think that when you assume the responsibility to hit a child, you're assuming the responsibility for their problems. I would sooner suspend the child and let the parents and the child deal with the problem and own that problem.
>
> Yesterday we had a little problem with one of the Grade Sixes over the lunch hour. His discipline for yesterday was to take home the lunchroom supervision rules that are written--and we have those written out of necessity--and to read them, and we drew up a contract by which he and his parents have to sign to agree to them, or else he had to go home. So those are the kinds of things we've done here.

However, there appear to be very few discipline problems at Riverside. Amy said that "the parents care about the well-being of their children, the academic well-being of their children; they want to know what's happening with them at the school." I witnessed a meeting between Amy and a father who had been asked to discuss the family set-up, as his young son had made some rather surprising statements about his family to an advisor who was testing him as a preliminary measure in providing him with some educational assistance. The father explained the family composition fully, went on to discuss the lad's progress at school, and then mentioned some Home and School Association matters. This example convinced me that Amy has earned the total confidence of many parents.

Parents as partners in education. The preceding section alludes to parents as partners in more individual cases. Amy sees the importance of the role of parents as a group in the affairs of her school. She feels strongly that the trained, professional teachers should have the final say in deciding on curriculum matters. However, she sees the need to listen to parents carefully, assess what they say, and act on advice as is deemed appropriate. Amy said:

> I spend a lot of time with parents telling them that they are an advisory group, and I will consider their advice; however, I am the professional, and my teachers are the professionals, and that when it comes to school organization and planning for learning, we do the best we can with the knowledge we have of the children. And they can accept that. You also have to be very careful there, too, and sometimes you have to be honest about the advice they give you and accept it, because you want a partnership in education, and if you keep listening to them but never taking their advice, it becomes another "Oh, well, here we go again." One instance was, we have a very high number of professional women. They had some concern about women in science and technology and what kind of a program elementary schools were promoting in science. It was minimal and not strong, and for two years we took science as a direction for this school, and our kids became pretty wise.

Amy further said:

> Earlier on I was talking to you about the [parent] role as advisory, that you have to accept what they say and use as much as possible, but you've also got to be very strong about saying to them that you're the professional in education and you know how your school needs to be organized and what curriculum needs to be planned for those children. Those are decisions we make here, and we're not going to be put in neutral and steered around, I guess, is the analogy I can use.

As previously stated, Amy sponsors parent awareness forums to help keep them abreast of trends in education, and these forums are well attended. The fact that parents actually interview teachers on educational matters and publish the interviews in their newsletter has also been mentioned. Parent involvement is very high at Riverside, and Amy says, "In terms of parents, we've had to learn to rechannel energy, and in that we've done the education forums for parents. What I've also tried to do with our parents is educate them in the ways of this school district."

Amy and elected staff attend monthly Home and School meetings at which she presents a prepared report.

Dealings with the wider community. Amy has constant contact with the people who run the day care centre at the school. As stated in a prior section, she is responsible for negotiating their lease and is also involved in purchasing materials for joint use. She knows the children in the centre. Amy also has daily contact with the operators of the before- and after-school-care centre across the street. Those people provide lunch supervision, at school, for the children involved in the program and also for some other children who do not go home for lunch, and that is mutually beneficial.

The fact that the childcare and before- and after-school-care centres and the school are filled with children of university academic staff members could be attributed to Riverside's proximity to the university. However, it is reasonable to assume that discerning parents would be selecting the best school for their children. Therefore, it can be assumed that parents have considerable faith in Amy and her staff. Her co-operative approach with parents must enhance the school's reputation in their eyes.

Student Developer

It is my intention that student matters be raised in most sections of this research. Such emphasis is necessary to reflect the central place children hold in all Amy's thoughts about Riverside.

Students as individuals. Amy believes strongly in treating students as individuals and made numerous comments which supported that contention. She said:

> I know my students very well: I know every student in this school, I know them by name, I know the consistency of their family, I know exactly what lessons they take after school and what they do on weekends, because I also go to some of their Little League games. And I feel that's really important. And when kids feel that you have that interest in them, I think they behave much better at school.

With regard to the above Amy says that "it took a shorter time to get to know students and their families well [than it did] in the last school where there were 540 kids." "Sometimes the lesson that a kid takes out of school is where he's gifted and talented. I can think of a little boy we have in the school right now who's a gifted violinist, but he's just an average academic student." I have previously cited examples demonstrating Amy's habit of discussing individual children's problems with parents as the need arises.

She also believes in disciplining children as individuals. She said that she would not administer the same punishment for the same "crime" on all occasions. Highly provoked or first offenders would be treated more leniently than children who offended habitually or had been unprovoked.

Amy emphasised the need for staff to gain skills in the counselling area so that children could be assisted despite the school being too small to employ a counsellor.

> Right now we have three priorities in this school: One is a Guidance and Counselling Initiatives Program. That was a priority last year, but we're moving into year two with it, and it'll require a year three, so it gives us a three-year commitment. We're doing different things each year under that one thing for our school, because we do not have a school counsellor. I sometimes would like the expertise of a school counsellor, but in terms of the percentage of time we could use one, we can't really have one here. Then if a child runs into a problem, what do you do? Hold your problem until Tuesday when the school counsellor gets here? No, we deal with it. So I think what we're trying to do is develop some of the knowledge and skills we need as staff members to help out those students. Where do we go? What resources are there in the community we can refer to?

At Riverside there is also an awareness that the smallness of the school precludes the possibility of moving a child from one class to another if cases of personality clash between two students or between a teacher and a student arise. There is only one class at each grade level at Riverside.

Evaluation of students. Amy clearly knows the abilities of her students. As discussed earlier, Riverside is almost always among the top five schools in system tests, and the average I.Q. of students at the school is some 20 points higher than in the total population. Under Amy's leadership the staff "hold high expectations for performance." Part of her evaluation involves assessing whether "students look involved and are having fun." Amy also said, "I'm very much involved in student evaluation as well. I want to know how teachers get information on those students."

As a teaching principal, Amy has her own group of children to evaluate in particular areas. In addition, the fact that she works with children frequently during her daily visits to classrooms provides her with an opportunity to help teachers evaluate students and to assess the accuracy of evaluations made by teachers.

Valuing the worth of students. Students at Riverside are recognised by their principal for the good that they do.

> In terms of the kids, every day I go into every classroom, and I spend anywhere from five minutes to three quarters of an hour, and it depends where I'm held up. I try to talk to kids; I try to see what's happening in their room. Every once in a while I take a little pad along and I know what's going on, and then I make a certificate for each door, for the kids, that tells them I really like their involvement in the bulletin board display or whatever, or the writing that their teachers have shared with me. Teachers send kids to my office, and the first thing that the Primary kids do when they come into my office is open the top left-hand drawer of my desk, because they know that if they bring something that they've drawn or written, that I have a sticker box, a cigar box full of stickers in there, and they'll be able to choose one. Most of the interactions with kids here are positive interactions.

Amy insists that staff look for the good in every child. She spoke about a boy who is a gifted violinist. She said,

> He's got a bland personality. If you didn't know him in this other area or hear him play the violin, you'd just sort of write him off. I won't do that to kids, and I won't let my teachers do that to kids.

Just as opportunities are there for staff to display leadership potential, students at Riverside are also provided with the chance to fill some leadership role.

> I believe very strongly in the student leadership roles in the school, that students behave better if they're given more responsibility, so our Grade Sixes do school patrols outside; they do student secretary: They answer the phone when my secretary's not in the office at noon hour or recess. Last year we had a little boy identified as a sort of writer-in-residence, and he was sent to a writing conference, and he had to be the promoter for writing, a model, and he has been, and he's contributed to our school newsletters, and that's positive. We feature kids' works in the school newsletters.

Dealing with bright children. Considerable attention has been given to the fact that Riverside students are considerably brighter than average. Amy ensures that staff go well beyond the curriculum limits set by Alberta Education. It has also been mentioned that the children may appear "sassy" but that this is evidence of their natural curiosity and intelligence. On one of my visits to Riverside, a group of children was debating the stay-inside-day decision taken that very cold morning. They were able to speak rationally about actual temperature combined with the windchill factor. Not many elementary school students could do that--they would just know that it was very cold. In this instance it was important that Amy won the debate logically to maintain the respect that children have for her.

Innovator

From my time spent at Riverside, I was able to identify where Amy had introduced two major innovations into overlapping areas of the school's operation. Both have been referred to earlier but warrant further comment.

The school had had a very stereotyped teacher evaluation policy which lacked imagination and provided little opportunity for formative evaluation to take place. The new system allows for much greater flexibility and staff development.

The second major change introduced by Amy is really much more complex and ties provincial, district, and school priorities to school and individual teachers' professional development policies and then to the teacher's performance appraisal. This appears to me to be a model for breaking down artificial barriers between areas of a school's operations which could well be emulated by others. No wonder Amy could say, "I was so excited about it, and the staff really was, too. . . . My boss was even impressed with it."

High Priestess

> I believe that I have a mission, and I guess I do preach it, more so by modelling than the actual words. As you get older you begin to believe in yourself more, in your successes. When I was younger I didn't have the confidence I have now, or I didn't always stand up for my beliefs because I didn't know whether they were valid or not, and now I will do it because I feel very strongly about them.

Amy could see herself, and principals generally, in the role of high priest, or priestess. She said,

> There are some things we do that we don't always put in writing, and I think that gets back to our professional growth plan. What are our expectations for students? We only have two here, that students must be actively involved in their own learning, and we hold high expectations for performance. We've gotten teachers to think about the learning strategies, environments, and organizations they used in schools, in the school in their classroom, and we've gotten those in writing.

I believe that Amy's clearly demonstrated insistence on getting to know children must have also rubbed off on teachers. This inference was supported when Amy told me that staff initially wanted set punishments for set "crimes" but now accept her philosophy and practice of matching punishment with the child rather than the crime.

The visual symbols of Riverside culture are clearly evident. Good work is displayed widely; merit certificates written by Amy are on doors; children find the stickers in the upper left-hand drawer of her desk; the school is clean, tidy, and attractive; Amy and her visitors are welcome in classrooms, and students happily approach her and her guests with their work, problems, or just to pass the time of day. They obviously see themselves as worthwhile individuals at Riverside Elementary School.

Chapter 5

Beryl's School, Suburbia

Getting to Know Beryl and Her School

I first worked with Beryl in 1988 before she transferred to Suburbia. She was recommended to me by a colleague and a faculty member as an effective principal who might co-operate with me on a course I was taking in program evaluation. I spoke to her on the telephone, and she agreed to meet me and discuss my work. Subsequently, Beryl agreed that I could evaluate the language program at her school. During the following five weeks I worked closely with Beryl and all of her staff. I got to know Beryl well and developed a great deal of respect for her as a very effective principal. I learned a lot about how she worked with children, staff, and parents. She told me early in 1989 that she had been promoted to a larger school, Suburbia.

When I decided to concentrate on three elementary schools for research for this thesis, I contacted Beryl, and she agreed to work with me again. I visited Suburbia, talked with her and her assistant principal, met with staff over coffee, and was taken on a conducted tour of the school. At this meeting I collected demographic data on the school, and this virtually completed stage one of my work with Beryl.

The second stage consisted of a taped interview with Beryl in her office. That interview lasted for approximately one and a half hours and provided me with the bulk of the data on Beryl's work at Suburbia. This stage was completed when I gave her the typed transcript and then went back to confirm that the transcript was an accurate record of our meeting, to seek clarification on several points, and to give Beryl the opportunity to provide further data.

The third stage of my contact with Beryl was at a joint interview with the three participants in my research. That meeting was held in Beryl's office and was taped and transcribed, and data from it was used to confirm similarities and differences between the three principals' work as described by them or inferred by me from what they had said.

During the whole process I had several telephone conversations with Beryl to arrange meetings and to seek clarification on specific issues.

The fourth and final stage of my involvement with Beryl was to take her a copy of the draft of this chapter and of the chapters dealing with the themes. She has agreed that I have portrayed an accurate view of her school, her work, and her ideas. Apart from my work with her in her previous school, I have met with Beryl six times. Those meetings, our telephone conversations, and her time reading what I had written about her would have taken the equivalent of three working days. I feel that Beryl has enjoyed the experience as much as I have appreciated her enthusiastic co-operation.

The School

Size

Suburbia Elementary is a large school catering to some 415 children in Kindergarten through Grade Six in 19 classrooms. Beryl, the non-teaching principal, has an assistant principal who teaches 70% of the time.

Setting

Suburbia is one of a number of elementary schools in a satellite city of one of Alberta's larger cities.

Enrolment Level

The school is filled to design capacity and has three relocatable classrooms occupied on site. A storeroom has been converted recently to a computer laboratory. There is no spare classroom which could be converted to a specialist area such as a mathematics laboratory, a feature Beryl would like in her school.

Socio-Economic and Educational Levels of Parents

Suburbia is very much a middle-class suburb. Almost all children live in single-family houses which their parents are in the process of purchasing. Beryl said that parents have little spare money for such things as extended family holidays.

Intelligence levels of students tested in district evaluations are average. This, according to Beryl, is a true reflection of their parents' abilities and educational levels.

An after-school-care program and a lunch program operate at the school.

Special Education Classes

Suburbia and its neighbouring elementary schools each cater to a specific special educational need. Suburbia has three adaptation classes which provide for children of average or near-average ability who are performing two or more years behind their peers in some subjects. The 30 children in these classes come from a number of suburbs. Some of Suburbia's children are enrolled in special education classes in neighbouring schools.

Summary

Suburbia is a large, suburban elementary school which caters to a community of average income and educational levels. The school's enrolment exceeds its design capacity and includes three special education classes.

Beryl's Work

Instructional Leader

Beryl sees instructional leadership as one of her most important tasks. As do the other participants in this study, she provides for such leadership in a variety of ways. Her sound knowledge of provincial and system goals and of children's abilities and attainments are the bases on which her strategies depend.

Knowledge of children. Having been in the school for only a few months, Beryl is taking steps to get to know the children quickly. She greets them as they come into school, participates in extramural activities, takes playground duty for teachers on occasion, teaches each class on a planned basis, and visits all classrooms regularly. Children with discipline, or other, problems are sent to Beryl, who has asked that for every problem child sent to her, two children deserving praise be sent too. Apart from demonstrating her emphasis on a positive approach to discipline, this helps her to get to know children's individual strengths and weaknesses.

Beryl has studied children's results in provincial and system exams. She has discussed perceived shortcomings with staff to indicate that changes seem necessary.

> I would say that we are underachieving, based on the last two years' results. We're achieving below provincial average, and the reason I'm saying that I think they're underachieving is that when we compare what they did on our set of four system exams, language arts, social studies, math, and science, we were below there. We have a comparison with where we stand in their ability scores on the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test. They are a fairly average group of kids, but we still are not achieving as high as I think we should according to the results. I think that tells me that this is one of the reasons why I'm concerned about the curriculum area. Are we not then teaching to curriculum, or what's happening? The first reaction that you get when you want to talk [to the teachers] about it is--of course, it hits them at Grade Three and Grade Six and Grade Nine; so the first kind of reaction is, "Why pick on the Grade Threes and Sixes? I mean, it's what they learned or didn't learn in Grade One and Two," or "It's what they didn't learn by the time they got to Grade Six." And it becomes an issue of "I'm taking the blame for all the things that happened before." And knowing the exams the way I do, I think I will have to look first at what the material is that was covered as far as the actual Grade Threes and Grade Sixes are concerned. Because I'm seeing kids who _can_ read and who _can_ write and who _can_ produce, but then if they can't answer the questions on what China is like, or they can't answer the questions on what Greek civilization was like, well, then, have we not covered those properly?

Beryl's personal leadership. The above quotation also demonstrates that Beryl knows the local exams and uses that as one avenue for getting to know her school. One of Beryl's first tasks at Suburbia was to prepare next year's budget. She saw this as requiring an immediate assessment of where the school was at, educationally, and what needed to be done.

> One of the first things I had to do when I arrived was start looking at the budget for next year, and of course when you start getting into that you're looking at what your priorities are going to be in some subject areas. I had to get busy very quickly and kind of analyse what was happening in language arts, what was happening in social studies, what's available for my staff. And so in my own mind I've done a little bit of

> that kind of research and I know that I'm going to have to make a conscious effort in language arts and social studies to upgrade and to encourage some of my staff, for instance, to do some in-servicing in some of the new strategies.

Beryl sees her own high standard of classroom teaching as a role model for staff which is more difficult to attain in a large school where she does not have a set teaching load.

> Beryl: I think that that's an area where you can put your money where your mouth is. I think what I'm going to need to do here is to say to teachers, "I would love to come in and teach a class today. Can I have yours? And I'd like you to stay." And so I think that that's one area that it would be more valuable than saying, "I'm going to come in and watch your class today, and then we're going to talk about what you could have done."
> Researcher: And while you're teaching them you're going to find out a lot about them?
> Beryl: Right, right. Another one of those subtle kinds of things. And also I think that, because I like working with children directly and it gives me a chance to get to know them, then obviously it's meeting more than one need at that point. I like teaching, so I miss it.

Beryl believes that her own enthusiasm should motivate staff: "I hope that my enthusiasm can generate some enthusiasm with the staff, and I think I should start with working with two, three, four people; hopefully, that'll be infectious." She sees herself working with individual teachers as well as with the staff as a whole. She said that from observations made during her regular class visits, she knows that she will have "to work with them individually on some strategies for resources they could use. . . . plus their teaching methods and so on." Beryl took an early opportunity to tell the staff of her own achievements and expectations.

> I had a really good chance at the very beginning when I came. We had one of our Thursday afternoon Professional Development days, and I took time to tell them a little bit about the kinds of things that I had done and what I would be looking at.

Delegation of instructional leadership. Beryl has "staff members assigned to various curriculum areas." It is their responsibility to follow up with staff any correspondence, or matters related to their curriculum areas, at staff meetings or other appropriate occasions. Beryl sees this as a way of empowering staff through making use of their expertise and collaborative decision making as well as a way of reducing her own work load.

Staff Developer

Beryl sees staff development as an integral part of her duties as principal, closely tied in with matters such as instructional leadership, staff supervision, and budget management.

Informal programs. In line with the above, and as mentioned earlier, Beryl apprised staff of her expectations at an early staff meeting. She has observed all classes in action and has had one-on-one staff discussions in which she has advised individuals regarding teaching methods and resources available.

Allocation of curriculum responsibilities to staff is another way of providing informal development for individual teachers and the staff as a whole.

> I have staff members who are assigned to various curriculum areas. Anything that pertains to science specifically or to art I place in their boxes, and it's their responsibility then to go through that and to share with staff anything that needs either a decision or information. That's worked quite well. Usually that kind of information, unless it's something that's very time specific, is shared at our staff meetings in terms of curriculum reports. I do like to see it, because one of the areas that I probably have more expertise in or actually more interest in is curriculum area, and so I like to know what's going on there.

Involving staff in budget preparation is another form of staff development. To make valid recommendations, teachers needed to think about what they were doing and what extra they needed to do. Sharing recommendations made by all staff and parents helped individuals gain a better perspective of the school as seen by the whole community.

Formal programs. Beryl has established a system of fortnightly staff development meetings at Suburbia. At these meetings subject co-ordinators familiarise staff with developments in their areas and lead discussions on related issues.

> Now, we do have, I mentioned before, those Thursday afternoons twice a month, and our plan is to use those. I will involve the staff as much as possible in developing them and working for the expertise that they need there. I see myself as being more of a supportive role.

Beryl also saw the budget process as an avenue of identifying staff development needs. She said that she was "going to have to make a conscious effort in language arts and social studies . . . to encourage some . . . staff . . . to do some inservicing in some of the new strategies." Beryl claimed that "one of the things that the system has been very good about for the most part is providing us with [inservice] opportunities."

Communicator

Beryl sees "the whole business of interaction" as a major component of her work: "I do a lot of listening, a lot of looking." This has helped Beryl get to know her school community well in the few brief months that she has been principal of Suburbia. A great wealth of communications of all types and at all levels became obvious to me during my visits to the school. As with Amy and Craig, it is clear to me that effective communication is a linchpin in Beryl's work as a principal.

Visual communication. A visit to the school and a walk around the classrooms provided visible evidence of Beryl's being an effective principal. The school is well maintained, clean, and attractive. While individual classrooms are a credit to teachers and children alike, hallways are also attractive with displays of children's work and awards for such things as citizenship.

Oral communication. It appears that Beryl places high value on the benefits of oral communication with her total school community.

> I feel very comfortable with the one-on-one. I feel, I think, very comfortable in front of the group when I work with them. As yet I find it's still a little harder to read this group as I work with them. I do a lot of listening, a lot of looking. I think I let people know fairly quickly what I'm thinking--not so much what I'm thinking, maybe, but what I expect. I try to be as open as possible with them if I don't like what they're doing, and then I tell them. I would also then try to make sure that I had an alternate solution to something that I didn't like. That's a little tough.

She devotes the first hour of her day, before the bell goes, to interaction with staff and students. This is a good indication of the importance Beryl places on communication. It would be very easy for her either to come to school later or to close her door and attend to paper work during that time.

> I find that my day starts out usually by just the interaction with staff. It could be filling requests for things that they need looked after during the day, or it could be quick conversations about equipment or resources or about children, and that usually takes up most of that hour prior to when school opens in the morning. I try to get in here by eight, quarter to eight, a little earlier if I know that there may be several things that need attention. I definitely use [that time] for just staff, and occasionally I'll go--in fact, quite often--go out to where the children come in when the bell goes.

Beryl gave several examples of oral communication with and among students. She talks to them as they come in at bell time, she speaks to children referred to her by staff, she addresses them at assemblies, and she encourages students to share good work with the whole school over the public address system first thing each morning when she passes on special announcements and conducts morning exercises.

As described earlier, Beryl interacts with staff before school, at their initiative. She has held formal one-on-one discussions with each staff member to discuss both professional and personal matters. Classroom visits, morning tea and lunch in the staffroom, and staff meetings provide numerous opportunities for formal and informal discussions with individual staff members and with groups of teachers. Beryl said,

> It's certainly more difficult to know everybody on as personal a basis [in a large school] as you can in a small school, and for someone like myself who really likes to know people a little better, that is one of my biggest concerns.

She said that she will have to rely, to some extent, on key people on staff to ensure that what she is saying is being interpreted uniformly the way she means it to be understood. In other words, she is developing networks to improve the effectiveness of her communication with staff.

Beryl related many examples of discussions with parents on a whole range of issues, of meetings with colleagues and central office personnel, and of liaison with the people who provide after-school care and lunchtime supervision.

Written communication. Written communication appears to play an extremely important part in Beryl's effective leadership at Suburbia. She at least skims all the mail coming into the school and either deals with it herself or passes it on to subject co-ordinators or other appropriate staff. This ensures that provincial and system policies are known to her and her staff.

Staff and parents were asked, in writing, for input into the school budget. This allowed them to provide considered opinions in an unhurried atmosphere. Although few parents availed themselves of this opportunity, staff all did. On receipt of staff responses, Beryl acted as described below:

> When I got that, I compiled it in such a way that I could say to them, "Here are the things that as a staff we've really felt quite strongly about," and it really came out quite close in the long run. "Here are some things that were less important; here are some things that we really need to take a look at that need improving, and are we going to eliminate them? And then when you come to that area of 'Here are some things that people consider really important,' let's address those, because that's where our areas of priority come from." And by doing that, you don't ever really have to eliminate anything that people have said, but immediately they saw where the consensus was. And I thought it worked really well.

Beryl writes citizenship awards for children and reads and signs all their report cards. Where situations warrant, she writes formal memos to staff. With the aid of her assistant principal she compiles the newsletter to parents and oversees staff newsletters to parents, advising them of proposed class programs. One of her most demanding tasks is the writing of annual evaluation reports on staff. At this time she is doing all of this herself, mainly to ensure that she gets to know each staff member, but also to comply with district policy that the person's immediate supervisor write such reports.

Business Manager

Beryl's involvement of staff and parents in the budget process has been mentioned previously. Like Amy, Beryl enjoys this aspect of her work and does ~~not find it~~ very time consuming. Beryl described her feelings about the budget process and the method she uses to get staff input. She provides a similar questionnaire to parents.

> Beryl: I find that enjoyable, and it doesn't take me very long to do it. I am familiar enough with the budget process, with some of the methods that I've used in getting input from staff for both the priorities and for some of their wish lists, for supplies and equipment and so on, so that that end of it for me is a fairly straightforward, not a terribly time-consuming thing. I like to play around a lot with the figures and just see what I could do if I had shifted my dollars a little bit here and a little bit there.
> Researcher: You talked about working with staff on priorities. How firm are you on making sure you get your own priorities across?
> Beryl: One of the things that I do for that is to say to my staff--I give them almost like a questionnaire, and I ask them to tell me all of the things that they like that are happening within this school, and also to indicate if there are any that they think could be improved on. I then take a look: "What are some things that you think very definitely need improving? Are there any things that really should be eliminated? And if you were to set your priorities by yourself for next year, what are the, say, three main areas that you would address in terms of the school?" And then I give them the last one I say: "If you had the dollars that you wanted, what things would you provide?"

Another, less tangible, aspect of the budget process is the "sharing" of children with special education needs with neighbouring schools. Having to cater for only adaptation classes at Suburbia means that the school can operate more efficiently than if it had to cater to the whole range of physical, mental, and emotional problems of students.

Facilities Manager

This is another aspect of her work which Beryl does not find onerous. In fact, much of the work is delegated or carried out by central office. However, she checks to see that the work is done properly.

> I put a lot of trust in my custodial staff in terms of the physical plant and a lot of trust in my curriculum area heads and my secretary in particular to keep a handle on the things like the supplies and the equipment that are needed for just the day-by-day flow of running things. Again, I try and make a fairly regular check, just to see if things are done, and I can

> do that without really even having to meet with those people. You learn to pick up on a few key spots that'll tell you whether everything that you need is there. So that area, again, doesn't take as much time, because you've put those kinds of responsibilities on someone else. We're a bit crowded here, so space is at a bit of a premium, so we do have to be a little careful about what we book. The staff have gotten used to the idea that if they need a space, they need to check between people in setting it up themselves. We've not had the responsibility of booking our school for the evening rentals; that's been done centrally, and we have a heavy usage in the evenings by community groups. I would, I think, in a way, prefer to have it done here. We have maybe a little bit more control over who comes in and who doesn't.

Staff Supervisor

Supervision is sometimes simplistically described as knowing what should be done, knowing what is being done, and attempting to rectify any deficiencies. Beryl employs a wide range of informal and formal tactics to ensure effective supervision of her staff at Suburbia.

Informal supervision. As discussed previously, Beryl makes frequent classroom visits, takes lessons in classes, checks students' report cards, sees both good and poor student work, and has studied provincial and system test results. This has given her a sound knowledge of how the children are achieving. Because of her familiarity with the curriculum, with the tests, and with what she can see children doing, she knows what they should be achieving. She said: "I'm seeing kids who can read and who can write and who can produce, but then if they can't answer the questions . . . then, have we not covered those [areas] properly?" Beryl provided many examples of how she is attempting to bridge the gap between expectations and achievement.

Soon after her appointment to Suburbia, Beryl involved staff heavily in the budget process. This forced them to think curriculum implementation when considering priorities. As mentioned earlier, she has delegated many curriculum and facilities matters to professional and ancillary staff and checks, sometimes covertly, to see that those tasks are carried out effectively.

> I put a lot of trust in my custodial staff in terms of the physical plant and a lot of trust in my curriculum area heads and my secretary in particular to keep a handle on the things like the supplies and the equipment that are needed for just the day-by-day flow of running things. Again, I try and make a fairly regular check, just to see if things are done, and I can do that without really even having to meet with those people. You learn to pick up on a few key spots that'll tell you whether everything that you need is there.

Beryl has discussed with class teachers the students' poor showing in provincial and system tests. She is attempting to get staff to take a more positive approach to children while still supporting and assisting teachers who are experiencing some difficulties in the discipline area.

> I'm trying as much as possible now to get them to use just a little different approach [to children]. I'd like them to be able to refer some good kids. I said, "For every one negative one that you send me, could you send me two that have done something that you really think was good, or that they've got a good piece of work to share?" I'm feeling that this is something that the kids here really need, a few more of the positive strokes rather than negative ones. Most of them do their own discipline, unless they run into a student who is really, really being defiant and the teacher is unable to cope within the classroom situation. I think that for the most part the teachers have gained a lot more by doing it on their own, establishing their own management skills, but certainly if they're having difficulty, then I try and set up something, or work with them on some kind of a plan that I think may work with that youngster within the classroom.

Beryl makes a real effort to be available to assist staff. This is evidenced by her use of her first hour at school each day and by her visits to the staff room at breaks. She also takes some playground supervision for teachers to show that she realizes that they have a heavy work schedule and appreciates their efforts.

> One of the things that I found successful in the past, and I think it's going to be something that will be helpful for me here, too, is that on a rotating basis I'm going to go to my teachers and just say, "You go the staffroom today; I'm going to take your supervision for you," and just go out and be with the kids. I've done it with a few people now, and with that one it'll just be a matter of making sure I get everybody. I think some of those extra things make them realize that I'm aware that they've got a very busy schedule and it's one way of getting a little bit of a break.

Beryl is attempting to get teachers to think through their advanced planning more carefully and to advise parents of those plans. This is an effective method of ensuring that staff implement well-planned programs.

> The staff all use, I won't say a monthly newsletter, but a theme newsletter or a letter which indicates to the parents what's being covered in curriculum over a given period of, say, a month to six weeks. And I encourage that. I have suggested that as being a valuable way of contacting parents. I have two or three teachers who are reluctant to produce that newsletter, and that again is something that I'm going to have to work on. I think the parents appreciate knowing what the children are taking, what they're going to be evaluated on, and that's particularly important.

Mention has been made of the fact that Beryl considers that her own role modelling as a teacher has beneficial effects on staff and that she will be making opportunities to teach in all classes with the teachers present.

One of the very important aspects of Beryl's staff supervision at Suburbia is that of increasing staff cohesiveness in an effort to get teachers to work more closely together to benefit children.

> One of the first things that I noticed right away, is that there's sort of your little group that sits at this table and your other little group that has coffee together at this table, and while they work well on committees and so on, they very definitely tend to polarize. I guess the important part of that is not so much to change the personalities, but to change their focus and to change their willingness to participate as a group. This staff are aware of that. They've had some things in the past with this school that have made this whole area of getting together a little more difficult, and so that in itself is an added or an extra that I wouldn't have in some schools.

__Formal supervision__. Beryl has based her formal supervision on the sound premise that staff should be aware of her expectations and know how she intends to achieve her goals. At an early staff meeting, she told the staff of her ideas and expectations. She has discussed the results of provincial and system tests with teachers and let them know that she is not convinced that the children at Suburbia are performing to capacity. Through the budgetary process she has ensured that staff are totally aware of the school's priorities.

A first step in the formal supervision of staff was a one-on-one discussion with each staff member, professional and ancillary. She has encouraged individual staff members to attend specific inservice courses. Beryl has also instituted fortnightly professional development meetings with the whole staff, where she acts as a facilitator and subject co-ordinators play a leading role. The final steps of formal supervision include formal classroom visits and written reports. Beryl said that this is a time-consuming task which she will undertake herself this year.

> Beryl: Evaluation is another area which really is a fairly time-consuming aspect. First of all, the visits to the classrooms, and I feel in fairness to the teachers that should be made on at least a three- or four-times-a-year formal type of visit if I'm going to be able to write down on paper something that's meaningful and accurate. We are expected to do a written report on every staff member yearly.
> Researcher: Are you trying to do that all yourself this year, or are you delegating some of it to your assistant principal?
> Beryl: I think I'm going to try and do it all.
> Researcher: Just to get to know people?
> Beryl: As much as anything, yes, and I guess partly because this staff is one that would feel that if someone else did it, that was not their person that they were directly reporting to, and that's been an issue, I think, as far as our Teachers' Association is concerned, as well as the Board itself has come out with the statement that nobody will be evaluated by someone other than the person directly above them. They've got quite a line set up. . . . Our own Board has said, you won't be evaluated by anybody other than the one that you report to. So in high schools the department heads are evaluating their

> teachers and that sort of thing, but here, of course, the staff would all report directly to me. I would not do the evaluation on my second custodian; that would be the responsibility of my head custodian. As it turns out here, my secretary is not responsible for the aides and the technicians; they all report to me, as well. So in this school, as I say, it happens that it would be all direct.
> Researcher: Would you think perhaps in the future you might change something there?
> Beryl: I think it could be. I would have to get to know this staff a little bit better than I do right now, but I'd be almost willing to wager that they would not feel comfortable with someone else doing it. I think what you really need to do is to look even at an elementary school, if they're that big, to look at the equivalent of what would be a curriculum coordinator or a department head type of position, and I think that that would be a very legitimate route to go.

Beryl made a strong point in stressing that she likes to work with the staff and be seen as someone who understands their problems and who will provide advice as requested. However, she knows that there are times in a principal's life when it is not possible to be everyone's friend.

> I like to do as many of those things with the staff as I possibly can, even though I know that at some point I may have to ream somebody out, or I might have to do something in terms of some very strong evaluative kinds of things. I think those people are more willing to accept evaluation or accept--I don't like that negative aspect of it, I guess, but it's there, whether we like it or not. And so I think they're more ready to accept that if they know it's someone who is doing the same kinds of things and knows what their problems are as well. So I don't have my door closed very often.

Public Relations Officer

Beryl has made a significant effort to develop close working relations with her community.

Parental responsibilities. Beryl believes that the large majority of parents of students attending Suburbia have a responsible attitude towards their children's welfare. She said:

> I would say the family support system here is really for the most part very good, that their parents are very supportive. Any of the ones that I've found it necessary to phone or to contact in any way about the child or the kind of discipline that we were going to use with them have followed through very well in what we've asked them to do. And so that's why I feel that it should be very quick in terms of getting good results. As in any school, you get a few who--I mean, "It's your problem: Once they're there, don't bother me any more with it. I have to look after them at home; it's your job when they get to the school." But we don't have many of those. I don't know if we'd have more than about half a dozen all together in this school.

Beryl has made it clear that although parents at Suburbia do not have a formal association, they do take an active role in their children's education.

Parents as partners in education. Beryl sought parental input into the development of the budget.

> I also gave that kind of a questionnaire to the parents as well as to the teachers as to what do you like? What would you change? And what do you see as some of the things that need addressing? The response was not great; there weren't a lot of those responses that came back. But I really feel very strongly that if they had had major concerns, they definitely would have used that opportunity to have said something.

Although there is no formal parent association there are parent co-ordinators, at school and class level, who arrange assistance requested by the school.

> They have a mother who is called a Parent Volunteer Co-ordinator, so that if I need something done I can call her and say, "I need three parents," and she'll round them up. But each teacher has developed a volunteer program within their own classroom, where they have committed parents who will come in on a regular basis to work with the children, to do xeroxing or chart making or bulletin boards, all of those kinds of things. Again, I think they're telling us that "We accept what you're doing as okay, and this is how we can support you and give you more time to work with our kids." I don't think that they would hesitate to let us know if they didn't like something.

Parents have let Beryl know that they do not want formal meetings unless a significant reason exists.

As explained in an earlier section, Beryl is encouraging all teachers to advise parents in advance of their programs for the next period of time. This is to assist them in knowing what their children will be doing and how they will be evaluated. Again, this provides parents with an opportunity to voice their opinions regarding curriculum matters should they so desire. Beryl said that she would value such comment.

> I would like to think that parents would react a little more to curriculum or to strategies, or at least maybe not say that they really wanted something different, but were willing to say, "Well, why are you doing this?" or "Could you explain to us why this particular procedure works better than another?" I suppose that could be a nuisance, too, but I like to think that they would question what we do. At any rate, that's the kind of parent involvement we have here.

It would appear that the parents are very willing to provide physical support for school programs in a variety of areas. However, they seem keen to leave the "real education to the professionals."

> There are parent meetings to attend. We don't have right now a very official Parent Advisory group. They have some officers in name, really, only, but when those meetings are called for discussion meetings and so on, it's done by myself. Parents are invited to come. This group of parents has been very, very supportive in terms of some fundraising and volunteering, those kinds of things, but have really indicated to me that, unless there's something really important, they'd just as soon not have meetings: "If you've got something very specific that you want me to do, whether it be sewing choir capes or if it's coming in xeroxing, or whether I need some help with a one-on-one with a student, no matter what the volunteer area is, we're there to do it for you. But we'd just as soon avoid meetings."

Dealings with the wider community.

> There is an after-school-care program and a lunch program here which operates through the school, and yet part of the after-school-care program is operated separately, and we just try and coordinate what goes on there, since we share some facilities. So I meet with them occasionally, and there are a few times when they call us down for a little extra help over the lunch hour.

Apart from this contact with daily users of the facilities, Beryl has contact with people who rent some part of the facilities out of school hours. As such use is organised centrally, Beryl usually becomes involved only if a problem arises. She said that the facilities are heavily booked and that the school is very much a community centre.

Student Developer

Throughout Beryl's discussions with me, the well-being of students was always foremost in her mind. Whether she was talking about staff development, communication, staff supervision, or any other aspect of her school, she considered what was best for the children. Her care for students is demonstrated in many ways.

Students as individuals. Beryl gets to know individual children through many avenues. Meeting them in the hallways, in the playground, in the classrooms, and in her office, or reading their report cards helps her to get to know individual children personally and academically.

> I see the interaction with children being one of the biggest areas [of my work]. Simply because there are so many of them, I think you run into more children in need. As far as the community is concerned and the needs of these children, these are people who are homeowners, probably budgeted fairly tightly; they don't have a lot of extra money and yet are very supportive of the school. The volunteer program is very important to a school this size to meet some of these needs of children.

Beryl involves parents in behaviour modification programs and, as mentioned in a previous section of this chapter, most parents co-operate with her in this matter. Some of her first hour at school each day usually involves discussions with staff concerning individual children. She helps teachers prepare programs for children causing discipline problems in their classrooms. Beryl is involved in the extramural program and liaises with the people who run the lunchtime and after-school care program. She also said that she sees children who can perform and can do well but are not performing to their potential. This is another clear indication that she knows and cares for individual children. The importance Beryl places on appropriate counselling for students is further solid evidence of her concerns for individual students.

> Researcher: Last time I was here you were saying you wanted to get a counsellor on staff part time.
> Beryl: I still feel quite strongly about that. I think that's essential.
> Researcher: How much time do you think you can use a counsellor in a school like this?
> Beryl: If we were to look at someone who was good at doing things like "Magic Circle" or "The DUSO Kit" or some of those things that are based on developing children's self-esteem and their ability to get along with each other, that would be important, plus someone who could do some of our testing for us, and who could provide an ear for children who are having difficulty. We could probably use someone half time quite easily. I really did all of that myself when I was at my last school. I did all of the testing, I did all of the talking with kids. Mind you, to a large measure I'm doing that here now, as well, but there weren't the numbers, so that it was possible to do it.

Evaluation of students. Although Beryl does not have a direct role in the formal evaluation of students, she is well aware of what is happening at the classroom and school levels through report cards and provincial and system exams. Her knowledge of individual children gained through classroom visits, her teaching, displays of work around the school, and from work children bring to her office assists her in assessing children's potential and the accuracy of teachers' assessments of them. Beryl said, "I have high expectations of children." This expectation has been communicated to children, teachers, and parents.

Valuing the worth of students. My discussions with Beryl highlighted her insistence on developing positive relations with students. The emphasis throughout the school is on commending good efforts by children.

> We also have once a month a student assembly, at which time children participate and various grades are assigned to look after them, and then at that time we give out our citizenship awards, safety awards, some of those kinds of things, and it's also a chance to speak to the children as a group.

Children who have received citizenship and safety awards have their names recorded on honour rolls in the hallways. Students who have written really good stories are rewarded by being encouraged to read their stories to the whole school over the public address system. Beryl has made it clear to staff that they must send two good children to her for every problem child sent. She said:

> It's very, very easy to get bogged down in doing just the discipline things of the child who's misbehaved, whether it be on the playground or in the classroom or around the school. So, unless you make a specific effort to catch those others with the positive ones, I don't think it happens; your day disappears too fast.

Dealing with students in adaptation classes. Beryl said that having special education classes at Suburbia made a significant additional workload for her. Liaison with other schools and involvement with bussing are initial, but not time-consuming, activities involved with having classes catering to students from a number of schools. Ongoing matters such as liaison with support personnel and parents, becoming familiar with new tests, and handling additional discipline problems caused by these children take much more of Beryl's time and attention.

> Researcher: What additional work does having Special Ed. classes in a school make for a principal?
> Beryl: There's a lot more documentation and arranging for testing of these children; there's more involvement with support staff like therapists and psychologists, and with parents, and that's the big area.

> Researcher: You implied, too, that these children constituted a fair number of your discipline problems in this school.
> Beryl: Yes. There's no question that that group take a larger percentage of time than their numbers warrant.
>
> I have come across some new tests that are used with this group of kids. We've got a very good Student Services team here, so that a lot of that kind of thing is turned over to them, but, of course, we have to interpret the results and use them in terms of funding and all of those kinds of things.

Innovator

"That's something that you play by ear . . . . I do a lot of listening, a lot of looking." Although Beryl knew that changes were necessary at Suburbia, she was careful that she gained staff confidence and co-operation rather than provoking confrontation. She said, "I like to do a lot of innovative things with kids when I teach, and that's a time-consuming thing." I saw evidence of that philosophy extended to her role as principal.

> That's something that you play by ear, in a sense, to see when people are ready for a change, and it goes back to that whole idea of talking one on one with, say, three or four people and then hoping their enthusiasm spreads out and envelops other people.

Developing networks as described in the above quotation is one method Beryl employs to get people ready for a change. A tactic used to get teachers ready for changes in their teaching was to involve them in developing budget priorities. Her early observations of children's work and their poor test results had indicated to her that changes were needed.

> I guess that being an innovator would show up in several areas. I would hope it would show up in curriculum here now; I would hope that it would start to show up in things that we do with the kids.

Last year the staff at Suburbia had expended a great deal of time and effort in producing a new discipline policy. Beryl found that policy too negative. She did not throw it out but asked that she be allowed to try the "Beryl way" as an intermediate step. The "Beryl way" involves counselling, and the rigid measures involved in last year's policy have had to be invoked only once since Beryl had her way.

Beryl has also initiated changes in the school's interaction with parents. She involved them in the budget process and is insisting that teachers keep parents aware of what they are doing in their classes through their newsletters.

High Priestess

Beryl said that she never saw herself in the role of high priestess. However, I found considerable evidence to support the notion that Beryl, an effective principal, does really fill that role.

Before her arrival at Suburbia, the staff already knew of some of her good work.

> It was rather interesting, because before I came I don't know who had told them, but someone had indicated that I had been responsible for getting the math lab started at my last school. They asked about the chances of looking at something like that here? So there's a seed already there. Then they came and asked if we could, in fact, go over and visit the math lab over there, which we did last Thursday. They were actually amazed at what we'd been able to accomplish in a short period of time. And of course there's a fairly large group that said, "Gee, we'd really like to see something like that put together."

Soon after her arrival at the school, Beryl made her expectations known to staff at a staff meeting.

Although she makes an effort to be one of the staff, she is aware that she has ultimate responsibility.

> I guess there's a certain wall there in terms of the fact that you are ultimately responsible for the people, the kids, the plant, all of those kinds of things, so that you can never become "one of the gang" as part of the staff. But I like to try and do as many things as possible that I expect them to do along with them. That would be contributing to the potluck lunches that we have, or whether it be the supervision schedule, where I take my turn.

Her twin visions of a positive approach to children and high expectations of their performance are clearly displayed and enunciated. As has been described earlier, good work is displayed and rewarded widely and publicly throughout the school.

Like an effective high priestess, Beryl believes in individuals in her team having worthwhile contributions to make. She also sees the need for a cohesive core to set a direction for the school. "I have never looked for total unanimity or whatever you want to think of it, because I think people just have that many different ways of contributing, but I think the core needs to be a cohesive thing."

Beryl also said, "I let people know fairly quickly what I'm thinking." I see this as another attribute of a high priestess. The use of a networking system to spread her enthusiasm to staff is further evidence of Beryl as the High Priestess of Suburbia Elementary School.

Chapter 6

Craig's School, Broad Meadows

Getting to Know Craig and His School

I decided that one of the three elementary schools in my study would be in a rural setting. Craig was recommended to me by one of his colleagues as an effective principal with an interest in research. I spoke to him on the telephone about my proposed research and told him that his colleague had recommended him to me. He agreed to meet with me before deciding to participate in my research.

I met Craig for the first time in his office in February. This is his first year at Broad Meadows. He had come from a large rural school where he had been the assistant principal. Craig agreed to work with me. He told me something about his school and took me on a guided tour of the facilities. On my next visit to Broad Meadows I observed Craig at work for some time and had another look at some of the facilities. This completed stage one of my work with Craig, and by that time I had gathered the demographic data on the school.

The second stage of my contact with Craig commenced on my second visit to his school. An interview which lasted nearly two hours was taped and later transcribed. I left a copy of the transcript with Craig and returned some days later to confirm that the transcript was an accurate record of our meeting, to clarify some issues arising from the transcript, and to allow Craig to provide further relevant information. This meeting, which lasted approximately an hour, was also taped and transcribed. Those two taped interviews provided me with the bulk of my data on Craig's work at Broad Meadows.

Stage three brought Craig together with Amy and Beryl for the first time. In Beryl's office at Suburbia we discussed the similarities and differences between the work of the three principals as told to me by them or inferred by me from what they had told me.

Apart from the six formal meetings which I had with Craig, I spoke to him on the telephone on several occasions to arrange meetings and to seek clarification on some issues raised during our meetings. I also met with him socially on two occasions. Those meetings allowed us to get to know more about each other in a relaxed atmosphere and, I think, assisted us in developing mutual respect and a good working relationship.

The fourth and final stage of my involvement with Craig was to take him a copy of the draft of this chapter and of the two chapters dealing with the themes. He has agreed that I have portrayed an accurate view of his school, his work, and his ideas. In all, I have met with Craig on seven occasions. Including the time taken in telephone conversations and in reading what I have written about him, Craig would have spent the equivalent of four working days on this research. I feel that he has enjoyed the experience as much as I have appreciated his enthusiastic co-operation.

The School

Size

Broad Meadows Elementary School has an enrolment of 188 students in Kindergarten through Grade Six. Students belong to 115 families. Both the principal and assistant principal teach 60% of the time. Of the 12 teaching staff, six work part time. Because Craig is a teaching principal, I am classifying Broad Meadows as a small school.

Setting

The school is set in a rural area a few kilometers away from the nearest urban centre and some 30 kilometers from the centre of a large city in Alberta. There are no shops within five kilometers of the school. All but two children come to school by bus. Twenty percent of the children's parents are farmers, and the other 80% live on acreages in the area and commute to work. The school is in the path of a high-voltage power line which is planned to go around three sides of the school grounds. From the use made of the facilities, it is clear that the school is the focal point of the community.

Enrolment Level

The school was built some 30 years ago and once catered for students from Kindergarten through Grade Nine. With only one class at each grade level, the school is currently half empty. Several rooms have been converted to specialist purposes such as computer laboratory, science laboratory, and art room.

At the time of my visits two rooms were being prepared to become a County Retraining Program centre.

The junior high school to which Broad Meadows students transfer is about to be closed, and new feeder boundaries have been drawn up, necessitating another junior high's being designated as the one to which the current students will transfer on leaving elementary school.

Socio-Economic and Educational Levels of Parents

Craig believes that the area generally could be classified as middle to upper socio-economic and educational levels. He said, "This is a suburban-rural, middle-class, upper-middle-class area. The parents are generally very well educated. The SES variables here would be pretty high, very demanding of the school and the programs."

The high cost of providing services to acreages preclude that lifestyle from low-income earners.

> Most parents would be two-parent families here with a high number of two-parent working families. What I find is that one of the spouses is working for personal gratification, as a break, or as a way to supplement the income for vacations, etc.

The parents are very active in fund raising for the school, and many students take extended vacations with their families.

Students perform well above provincial average on provincial tests.

The above factors support Craig's contention regarding the socio-economic level of the Broad Meadows community.

Stability

Despite low enrolments, Broad Meadows is a stable school. Many of the parents once attended the school as students. A high percentage of teachers has been at the school for many years. If there were an upturn in the economy it is predicted that enrolments would increase as more of the land which has been subdivided for acreages would be sold and developed as permanent residences.

Part-Time Teachers

Six of the 12 teachers at Broad Meadows are part-time staff.

Summary

Broad Meadows is a small, rural, elementary school whose students come from families of middle- to upper-socio-economic and educational levels. Approximately half of the rooms are not permanently in use as classrooms. There is a significant number of part-time teachers on the staff.

Craig's Work

Instructional Leader

During his career as an elementary school teacher, Craig has taught all elementary grades except Kindergarten. He has been seen as a most effective teacher. Such experience gives him an excellent background for providing instructional leadership in his school.

Knowledge of children. Craig teaches language arts and math in one class and art in another. This has helped him to get to know two of the seven classes at Broad Meadows well. He visits all classrooms frequently so gets to know something about all children in the classroom situation. He supervises children off the busses in the morning, takes part in playground supervision, greets children in the hallways, and sometimes "go[es] out and play[s] marbles with the kids." Therefore, Craig knows the students well outside the classroom too.

Having a sound knowledge of provincial and system tests and results, and through discussing student evaluation with staff, Craig has developed a well-rounded knowledge of the children in the school. Student welfare is central to all of his planning. He said, "We attempt to make staff meetings as productive and student and learning centred as possible."

Craig's personal leadership. "The teachers here are very curriculum driven, and if it works, great! If it might work I'll try it, but if it isn't working I'm going to throw it out!" That quotation is a strong indication that Craig is demonstrating sound educational leadership. He has no intention of instituting change for change's sake. He lets staff continue with previous practices and will institute change only if past practice is evaluated as ineffective.

"Fortunately, I've been able to teach from Grade One to Seven level, so I'm fairly aware of the curriculum." Craig's knowledge of the curriculum and his effective teaching serve as a good role model for staff.

> My teaching role is a two-edged sword. Staff recognize your teaching workload. I think they appreciate the fact that you understand what it is like to have to teach the curriculum and to engage in student evaluation; to participate in the spectrum of student activities. In a way it enhances one's relationship with staff as they realize you are grappling with the same concerns and challenges that they are, and that's a positive. It really creates a lot of late nights, attempting to be well prepared, because you are visible. Staff are aware of what you're doing in your classes. . . . Teaching is important, because that keeps your focus. You have the same joys, exasperations, that teaching is a challenge, and I think it's a joint challenge between the teaching and the administration.

Craig reads all correspondence that comes into the school, passes curriculum matters on to staff members responsible for those areas, and ensures that followup occurs at staff meetings or as appropriate. As should any principal, Craig said, "We attempt to align school practices with county policy and provincial programming." Here again, his personal knowledge of the curriculum, gained through his teaching experience, gives him the opportunity to display leadership in this most important aspect of school organisation.

Delegation of instructional leadership. Craig said that "because the time allocations just aren't there" he cannot provide release time for teachers to co-ordinate subjects across the school. However, there are teachers responsible for each curriculum area. Staff expertise is tapped, and staff are involved and empowered in the curriculum areas.

> The staff member responsible for that [subject] speaks of any changes; curriculum concerns are brought up; challenge concerns--challenge program concerns. We attempt to problem solve; we arrange ad hoc committees of the existing staff to then report back on any materials changes and recommendations that they have. . . . So we're attempting to be proactive, circulating materials: "What's your response? Then let's deal with it as a collective in the meeting." So we're attempting in that way to come up with a curriculum consensus.

The sharing of the instructional leadership within the school is an indication that Craig is not afraid to loosen the reins of leadership in order to develop a more effective team approach in this vital area of the school's operation. Power given to the staff is confirmed when they became involved in budget decisions. "Staff recognise very well that they have been making decisions with regards to the language arts, division one series."

Staff Developer

Staff development at Broad Meadows is a multifaceted process closely intertwined with other processes such as instructional leadership, staff supervision, student development, and communication.

Informal programs.

> A lot of it really has to become that [management by wandering around]. A lot of it is on an ad hoc basis. As you see something, depending upon the salience of it, you address it, and staff appear quite open to that.

Staff rely on Craig's expertise to help develop their assessment and reporting skills. "I review with teachers how they are arriving at their report card evaluations. Many times I have staff showing me samples of work: How would I judge this piece of work? What kinds of strategies? Should this go home?"

Craig also said, "My perception of a leader is somebody who encourages people to grow." This philosophy appears to be in practice at Broad Meadows. As discussed previously, staff are heavily involved in the whole budget process of setting priorities and deciding on allocations. Their active participation in staff meetings also provides avenues for professional growth.

> In terms of staff development, all staff meetings are circulated on a rotational basis through all classrooms. So what happens, Learning Assistance, Kindergarten, Grade One, . . . each month an assigned teacher takes the leadership role of sharing what's happening in their room, what the curriculum areas are, any help, any ideas, suggestions on materials, evaluation ideas, etc. Can another class of students assist in ensuring that some activity is broadened or enhanced? They share student concerns. That can cover everything including evaluation, discipline, homework, and parental reactions, or ideas on how we can help each other. The goal is to foster openness, the appreciation of what's happening in the room right next to you or beyond. I think we have to encourage that in Grades One to Six. Each area is unique, although we share commonalities. Let's develop the teamwork approach, staff coaching each other, and trying to assist each other in a positive way. So staff development's involved in heightening the awareness of the resources that this school has, or that other schools may have. So we're attempting to encourage a real continuity.

The above quotation is an excellent example of how Craig fosters staff development informally but in a well-planned manner.

Formal programs. Craig has encouraged his staff to think carefully about their own professional growth.

> We've attempted to implement a PGP program, a Professional Growth Plan, this year. It's met with some enthusiasm and some degree of apprehension, possibly because it's attempting to have people formally define their professional and personal goals for the year that they would like to attempt risks in. I think we're attempting to encourage staff to recognize that

> they do their best learning, just as with kids, when we attempt. Sometimes we succeed; recognizably, we may fail, and it's great to fail. Then let's start again.

Craig encourages staff to take maximum advantage of opportunities available for staff development. Each teacher is allowed two substitute days per year. The school's staff development program is developed logically.

> As a system, we are driven by the board vision, by the system goals and objectives, and that's articulated and operationalized at a system level through the Central Office thrust for the ongoing school year. The schools--the school principal and the staff--are expected to collectively assess where their school is currently sitting with respect to those goals and see how one can attempt to enhance current practices in a school. So it is collaborative. We have to submit that early in the year, and we review that twice, three times during the year with the staff: Are we reaching those goals?

Teachers are encouraged to participate in after-hours visits to other schools. These meetings are organised at system level.

> One encourages staff to engage in the system networking opportunity at each grade level, which Central Office supervisors are attempting to coordinate. It's fostered at a system level, which is excellent. It's something new. I think it shows a lot of promise, because many times we're dealing within a narrow focus, i.e., just our own classroom, and by being able to go out and talk with other staff and see, "Yes, in my grade we share the same curriculum concerns, the same student behavioral concerns, etc." It allows people a chance to bounce ideas off, clarify, and improve their own teaching, and they also bring back feedback for the school. Other elementaries are trying things. "Could it work here? Could we try it?" I think that's really important. This is totally after school, so it relies on no school budgets, which is excellent, because ours are so limited.

Craig also encourages his teachers to participate in staff development sponsored by the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Communicator

Craig places a heavy emphasis on the importance of effective communication channels in the work of the principal. He regrets that his heavy teaching load restricts his ability to communicate with the total population.

> The time allocation is limited to perform the tasks and expectations. So what it means is that we circulate memos, we circulate curriculum changes, we ask staff to respond. . . . One has to make a conscious effort, even when you're in class, one has to try to balance between going out and playing marbles with the kids at recess, which is what I'd like to do, as well as going and having a cup of coffee with the staff and sharing ideas and developing rapport there. One walks a balance between both, so one alternates; one consciously attempts to say, "Well, Monday, beginning of the week, I better hit the staff room first recess and have a cup of coffee and find out how the weekend went, how staff are doing." Then the afternoon I'll go out and play marbles with the kids, and one has to balance both. It's difficult enough just attempting to communicate with the Assistant Principal; we rely on Post-It notes on a chronic basis.

I found evidence that Craig compensates for the lack of time during the school day for communication by making himself available out of school hours.

Visual communication. Visual communication plays an important part in Craig's role as principal. He learns from what he sees. Before he implements any change he "does a lot of watching." He has learned a lot about the children's families from home visits and a tremendous amount about what is happening in his school through frequent visits to classrooms. Similarly, members of the school community, or visitors such as I was, can learn a lot about Craig from what can be seen around the school. The school is well maintained, clean, tidy, and attractive. The "thought for the day," the school motto, children's good work, and trophies attractively displayed announce to anyone walking into the foyer that here is a school which takes pride in achieving high standards in all areas of its operation.

Oral communication. Craig is involved in, and encourages, a wealth of oral communication in all areas of running the school. The formal school day commences with oral communication via the public address system. This, through the "thought for the day," generates further discussion.

> We use the PA on a morning basis. We introduce substitutes in the morning, we introduce parent volunteers in the school, special visitors, we provide information on the intramural program at lunchtime, reminders for parent-teacher interviews or milk money or whatever is involved that day, pizza days or hamburger days or book fairs; those materials are announced as well as the thought for the day, which is usually something positive and upbeat, and then the kids and the teachers talk about it in the morning. So we're attempting to utilize that, which provides not only staff focus, student focus, keeps the paperwork to a minimum, and we keep the records here in the office. It's an announcement record book.

Craig likes to get to know his total community well and finds that this entails talking to everyone officially and unofficially whenever occasions arise or by making an effort to ensure that such discussions occur. He talks to children whenever he sees them throughout the day. He talks with staff socially as well as professionally and, through meeting procedures established, ensures that staff interact orally on the total range of the school's activities. If a matter arises which concerns several staff, Craig will call impromptu meetings.

> If there is an emergent concern that cannot wait till staff meeting or an informal comment, and if it involves more than one or two staff members, then we will call a quick recess meeting, and we will inform staff of what's up, whatever the situation is. Again, in a school this size, many times that appears to be quite effective.

Craig talks with parents at school, on social occasions, or when he meets them in shopping centres, and either makes home visits or nighttime telephone calls if this seems necessary to contact parents. He plans parent meetings with the parents and participates in their meetings. He is also involved in meetings with his colleagues in other schools and has the usual telephone and personal contact with central office personnel. In this rural setting he becomes involved, too, with organisations which use the facilities after school hours. Craig even finds himself involved in disputes between bus drivers.

> Parents are concerned, "Well, there's a birthday party. I'd like Johnny to go home on another bus." That causes concerns: You're running things by bus drivers, keeping them informed. Is there a note? Oh, my goodness. One is involved in conflicts between bus drivers, which is really interesting, too, where bus drivers are having conflicts, and there are attempts to draw you into it as a principal, as if you wished to be the mediator in something which is really beyond your control.

Written communication. Craig sees written communication as essential in running his school. Such communication ranges from Post-It notes, which they rely on "on a chronic basis," to the regular newsletters which he writes in conjunction with his assistant principal. Much of his formal communication with staff "relies on computer memos." He produces written agendas for staff meetings.

He writes "letters home to parents explaining the need for bus route revisions and the effective dates for the revisions to take place." Craig stressed the value that the school community places on the monthly newsletter which goes out from the school.

> Craig: We have a Broad Meadows Parent Association newsletter, which comes out on a regular basis. We also have an Early Childhood Services newsletter, which goes out on a monthly basis. We also have a school general newsletter, which goes out on a monthly basis. The Broad Meadows general newsletter is very, very comprehensive. We are sending it out once a month due to budget and the extensive expense in terms of photocopying, etc. It's between three and four pages long. Parents anxiously wait for it the second-last school day of the

> month, and if it doesn't go home, there is a phone call saying, "Hey, he didn't bring it home again. Could you please remind him?" It includes a calendar, and it's usually put on people's fridges at home. Or at least, that's the reports I have heard.
> Researcher: What's your involvement in the production of it?
> Craig: I do it.
> Researcher: You write it?
> Craig: I write it, right. I write the school newsletter. I type it up, draft it, and then run it by the Assistant Principal. He provides titles, any other ideas, we then sit down and revise it again.

As he sees staff evaluation as a necessity, he is particular that all evidence is provided appropriately in writing to the particular staff member.

> Craig: The policy draft that is in review right now will involve giving all anecdotal notes, records, tapes to the teacher. Anecdotal records and any school file retained by the administration must be shared with that staff member. They have access to whatever is in their file, so it cannot be an anecdotal approach unless they also receive a copy of that anecdotal comment.
> Researcher: How does the staff here react to your supervision of them?
> Craig: Things appear to be quite positive. I think we're attempting to be very positive, constructive, and appreciative of the good things that are happening. I keep anecdotal records of areas where staff make contributions that I am aware of. I then draft a letter acknowledging some of the things that I am aware of and my appreciation for their involvement in developing puppet plays and sharing it with the staff or with students, attempting to provide the positive feedback. Staff receive a copy of that, they acknowledge receipt, they're able to respond and add further comments. I place it in their file.

Business Manager

The inadequacy of resources available to small schools was one of the major themes which ran through my discussions with Craig.

> Craig: Actually, economy of scale: When so much of the educational environment is driven by student enrolment, that dictates your administrative time, your counsellor time, your clerical support time, your instructional staff allocation, your library clerk time. Those kinds of factors are so driven, and, of course, your budget, are all driven by the enrolment. One is attempting to provide the same educational experiences,

the same spectrum of student learning opportunities with limited resources to accomplish it.
Researcher: So you see it limiting the range of programs you can offer?
Craig: To a degree, yes, it does. One taps staff resources and community volunteers to a high degree due to the lack of staff and in-school resources that are available. One attempts to prioritize areas with staff interests and willingness to contribute, so they are mutually compatible. . . . The resources are much more limited; it's driven by student numbers. Staff development funds are limited. . . . Obviously, smaller schools, economy of scale; we can only attempt so much and attempt to be successful at it. . . . Our secretarial time is very limited. It's a full-time position, but she does the books, she handles the phone, she does the school information system, student information system, and the SIS computer input. She's extremely taxed. She handles all the student runny noses if the administration aren't here. We're attempting to provide as much support to each other as possible.

Craig: It really limits the depth and scope of administrative-task operationalization. We're attempting to meet as many needs within that reality. And there's not really a lot that one can do. Central Office is aware, is attempting to provide some assistance for next year, and they are providing limited assistance this year.
Researcher: I presume you're funded on a per-capita, just enrolment basis, regardless of the size of your school. Is there any weighting for the small schools? Do they get more per head than the large schools?
Craig: No, no. The funding is the same; the formula for times is identical, irrespective of the school. But they have established a minimum point seven five time for admin. All other times are totally triggered by enrolment. . . . We have to write and request additional funding for textbooks. Especially when new curriculum thrusts are taking place, we have to go into funding agreements with Central Office and cost share. Otherwise we are not able to meet our obligations.
Researcher: There are a couple of new curricula in the pipeline this year?
Craig: Music and language arts.
Researcher: And social is coming up next year?
Craig: And social is coming up, yes. In fact, some of our teachers have just attended a course. Those are real concerns, because the language arts sits here right beside my desk. It's forty-one hundred for language arts and forty-four hundred for music. Those are required text materials to operationalize the program. On our budget allocation we could purchase one of those series, but we couldn't fund the others without having the assistance of Central Office. That does not preclude the ability to replace existing lab materials or consumable resources in the school. So, to meet next year's needs, we'd be looking at approximately twelve thousand dollars to meet our

> curriculum needs. The consumables come out of our--if it is Learning Resource Distribution Centre text materials, that comes out of the Student Learning Resource fee, which is approximately four thousand. That's where we are, in theory, supposed to be buying our textbooks, so we're in a serious deficit there.

The preceding quotations are some of the comments made by Craig which clearly express his concern that small schools are inadequately resourced.

Despite the very limited flexibility in the Broad Meadows budget, Craig involved the staff in deciding how funds available would be committed. It would seem that this was the first time the staff had had such an input and that they gained a better understanding of the budget process as a result.

> I sat down and just drafted the existing costs, what last year's costs were, looked at what areas were in the red, in the black, and then attempted to look at past cost increase, broke it down, took those areas that cannot be touched as they are--student desk grant, or it's a capital equipment grant or a non-capital equipment grant or a telephone subsidy, etc. After taking those items and filling them in, staff received a copy of the budget at staff meeting. We reviewed how the budget had been arrived at. A number of staff were not aware of how the funds were actually created. We explained it and reviewed those areas where we have flexibility, and staff did provide some suggestions. Staff recognize that they have been making decisions with regards to the language arts, division one series. They've made recommendations with regards to music series, they make recommendations with regards to science materials, science consumables, obsolete books, text replacement. We consolidated that, and staff had the opportunity to provide priorities within the budgeting process. I found staff gained an awareness of how limited the funds are, and I think that led to staff looking at the quality of the decision.

Craig further commented that elementary schools were at a disadvantage when compared with secondary schools.

> The Elementary Principals' Association has made presentations in the past with respect to the budget needs of the elementary schools, as the secondary principals have received through Alberta Education a grant through the Learning Resource

> Distribution Centre in the form of a credit towards purchasing materials. We do not have a grant; therefore, we have serious problems at the elementary level.

I gained the impression that Craig's favourite task was not managing finances at Broad Meadows.

Facilities Manager

As all but two of the children attending Broad Meadows Elementary School travel on school busses, I am including the principal's involvement in bussing as a part of facilities management.

Buildings manager. Craig sees the repairs and maintenance aspect of his job as being necessary but not obtrusive on his real work as principal. He tries to ensure that all problems are noted before the commencement of the school year and then handles other problems as they arise. The 30-year-old buildings appear to be in a very good state of repair.

> As an administrative team, one is aware of the state, the condition of the building. One generally does not have time during the day to be really concerned about the building. One deals with problems such as leaky pipes, water coming through the roof, plugged sewer lines, electrical plug-ins in the parking lot not working, on an emergent basis. Those situations, they happen. With regards to facilities on an ongoing basis, we have attempted to incorporate a comprehensive review early in the school year, and we then generate work requests from the entire building at that point in time, keeping in mind the Building Quality Restoration Plan for government submission, looking at areas which are facilities budget requests, which items can be fixed, repaired, on the weekly facilities crew's visits, and then we submit those and then deal with other areas along the way as they crop up.

With only half of the classrooms used as permanent class bases, timetabling facilities for use during school time is no problem.

> As a former elementary-junior high here, we have a small enrolment. We have a lot of time to utilize the gymnasium; it's not booked a lot of the day. The computer room, there's lots of time periods available there. Staff inform the secretary, and then it's just forwarded to us.

The facilities are heavily booked for community use out of school hours. However, as bookings are arranged centrally, Craig has to become involved only if there is a problem. Needless to say, he has considerable interaction with users, as many are parents of students at the school.

> Craig: With regards to after-hours bookings, that is handled through the Facilities Department. There is a county booking clerk, and external agencies are able to contact the clerk and book and pay the requisite fees. I do not become involved unless it coincides with a special function. The school takes priority for the use of the gymnasium or some facet of the building. We attempt to provide any booking groups with at least two week's notice, unless it is an emergency, and that has only happened once here so far, where a group has been bumped. The Facilities Department will attempt to reschedule them. If you look at this time here for March, we are booked quite a number of days, and it works quite well.
> Researcher: You're quite happy with them doing the booking?
> Craig: Yes. It's another job that I'm just as glad we don't have to look after. If there is a problem with a particular group, then I become aware of it. It's reviewed with the booking clerk, the custodian, who is the supervisor during that time, and if need be I will address concerns with the association president for that booking group. So it works out pretty well.

Bussing. Although the bulk of the bussing is organised centrally, Craig is heavily involved in the day-to-day matters related to having most of his children coming to school by bus.

> Craig: Bussing is a wonderful joy [sarcasm] in a rural setting. It causes a tremendous amount of challenge. While bus routes for elementary students, excluding the Early Childhood Services, are developed by Student Transportation Services, which is Central Office directed, one deals a tremendous amount with student discipline problems; one becomes very aware of differing bus driver expectations and approaches to student discipline and school-community relations and parent-student interaction; interpersonal skills become pretty crucial. One does some firefighting in that area. Actually,

bussing takes a tremendous amount of time and energy in a rural setting.

The seven busses here tie up with other schools. They feed up with a number of junior highs in the area and transfer points in the city, including one of the high schools, so we do feed in on a number of various routes. For example, in the morning we have a number of junior high students that are dropped off here and then wait for their bus, which involves supervision as well to some degree. One also, then, has problems that when they get off the bus, they decide it's time to go for a smoke behind the skating rink shack, so you have to address some of those concerns and forward that on to one of the junior high principals. So bussing is a lot of work.

In the Early Childhood Services program you, as principal, the ECS teacher, and the ECS parent volunteer transportation co-ordinator become intimately involved in the various Range Roads and where the kindergarten bus can turn around and whose yard they can back up into without having a concern and circling areas and trying to reduce dead miles. No one gets paid for dead miles, so it becomes a major task attempting to come up with a bus route that gets students home in a time period when a babysitter is available to look after them.

Researcher: So you're involved, then, in the development and revision of bus routes?

Craig: Yes. In fact, we're also consulted on the existing Grade One to Six bus routes. For example, you have students with severe health problems. That involves reviewing with one of the bus drivers the need for change, running it through the Bus Transportation Supervisor at Central Office, distributing letters home to parents explaining the need for bus route revisions and the effective date for the revision to take place. You not only have those kinds of things, but you've also got students that sometimes miss the bus. They think they're going to be getting a ride home, they forget their notes, so you wind up having phone calls being made, or students getting lost on the bus with the smaller kids, or taking their bus number on their little lapel and going out with them and making sure they make it to the bus, making sure that they're comfortable.

Staff Supervisor

Craig expressed concerns regarding his ability to carry out teacher evaluation adequately within the time available to him, despite sharing the task equally with his assistant principal. As he takes this important aspect of his work very seriously, it is understandable that not meeting his deadlines in this matter really worries him.

> Researcher: Craig, you mentioned a problem with regard to staff supervision. I'm not sure whether you're saying it's a problem to get the time to do it or whether it's some other problem that you see.
> Craig: It is a time problem; it's a time problem. I've informed Central Office in September of the concern, as I requested additional admin. time to be able to work on it, as I would have anticipated being in the rooms by October thirtieth and would have been in four times before the end of the year. That has not taken place.
> Researcher: That's four official visits?
> Craig: Four official visits, right; four written-up visits.

Formal supervision. Craig described his jurisdiction's official policy on teacher appraisal thus:

> Craig: There are system directives that it's to be on an ongoing growth process cycle of the Part One Evaluation, which stays in the school, and a Part Two Evaluation, which is forwarded to Central Office. Yes, it has been a problem with regard to staff supervision, and I am not so pleased with that. There are a number of ways to get around that problem. As it is a Part One-Part Two cycle, it is possible to have a long-range unit and daily plan review and examine the areas of extracurricular activities to constitute your Part One Evaluation. And then your Part Two, or your second-year cycle evaluation, you then engage in the actual classroom observation cycle. And that is in essence what one has to do here. As the implementation cycle with the county plan has been revised, we have a schedule of a number of staff that must be evaluated this year, and a Part Two submitted. The Part One of the evaluation, therefore, hasn't been a problem, but Part Two is, trying to access time, especially when with the overlap the Assistant Principal and myself are unable to many times cover classes, as we're both teaching sixty percent of the time.
> Researcher: Do you delegate some of your staff supervision to your Assistant Principal?
> Craig: Yes. We will be splitting that fifty percent. . . . The system has developed an ongoing model with an every-two-year transmission of a formal report to Central Office. We do keep formal reports within the school of the Part One, and the teacher receives the Part One and Part Two appraisal forms, the originals. Part One and Two copies are maintained by the principal, and a Part Two copy is submitted to Central Office. Again, time is very limited.

Some formal supervision may be triggered by something Craig sees while he moves around the school.

> A lot of it [staff supervision] really has to become that [management by wandering around]. A lot of it is on an ad hoc basis. As you see something you address it, and staff appear quite open to that. . . . Depending on the severity or the salience of the concern, it would be addressed as soon as is possible. If it's severe, I would put it in a memo format: "Please meet with me with respect to such-and-such." And then we would have to draw something up.

As already mentioned, Craig explained that any anecdotal records of such intervention need to be kept, with the original going to the teacher concerned.

Informal supervision. Mention has already been made of Craig's informal supervision as he walks around the classroom. His insistence that each staff member draw up a professional growth plan is an indication that he is asking them to identify their own deficiencies and take appropriate action. Teachers' work throughout the year is supported, checked, and discussed individually and in groups.

> All long-range plans, yearly plans, are examined by the administration. We review them individually and meet with staff members, review any concerns, examine the evaluation strategies, the curriculum resources, all available as to whether the materials are aligned with the provincial program of studies. That is required by September thirtieth. We have division meetings, i.e., kindergarten, one to three, prior to each reporting period; four to six as well, division two. We have a lot of informal meetings here.

Part-time staff. Craig intimated that supervision of part-time teachers can be difficult to organise. "Being a small school with twelve staff, and six are part time ranging from point three to point seven, it oftentimes becomes quite difficult to coordinate everyone's attendance except at staff meeting days and on division meeting times."

Public Relations Officer

From my discussions with Craig it became obvious that there is a vitality in the relations between Broad Meadows school and its community.

Parental responsibilities. Parents have developed a co-operative approach regarding discipline, and Craig believes that this is working well.

> I've found parents very supportive. Students know that parents are in the school on a regular basis, or they see you at the local Safeway store, the students know that parents say, "How's my son doing? Has he been in your office yet this year?" And if it's yes, they say, "Great! I'll come in and see you next week. We'd better iron this out." There is an ownership: Students are aware that their parents have a rapport. The attitude towards administration is quite positive.

There is an active parent association which acts in an advisory and fund-raising capacity.

> With regards to the Parent-Teacher Association, we have the Broad Meadows Parent Group, which is a registered society, and the Association is active in securing funds for computers or, in the case of the playground, they provided a tremendous amount of money to replace existing playground apparatus. I attend the meetings there, and, again, it is advisory as per the new School Advisory Council in the new School Act.

Craig feels that through an "evolutionary process" the parent group will want to develop more than an advisory role. At present parents contribute greatly by assisting in the classrooms.

> There is a tremendous amount of parent volunteer work. We retain a Volunteer Parent Log in the General Office. There's a lot of involvement there. But, again, as I'm sure it is in a number of schools, the economic realities of society are impacting on the number of people that are able to participate. We have a core group of volunteers--approximately twenty-five or thirty parents. They're in on a regular basis, and that is in addition to those parents that contribute in the ECS program on a rotational basis with snacks and volunteering there. We have another thirty that volunteer here regularly.

Apart from one parent who showed some interest in extending work with the track team, until she found out how much work was involved, there has been no indication that parents want to become involved in the school's curriculum.

Craig feels that some of the external issues involving the school of recent months may have generated more than normal parent interest in the school.

> I would say parent involvement is vigorous as emergent issues develop, whether it be the Energy Resources Conservation Board and the powerline issue, whether it be the proposed dump site of last year by the city, whether it be a change of junior high boundaries, which Broad Meadows is a feeder school for. Those kinds of issues generate a tremendous amount of parent activity and involvement in short order.

Parents as partners in education.

> In terms of vision, our vision really is our logo: "Together We Are Strong." In fact, it's even highlighted in the Parent Association newsletter, but the parents have said--and I'll just find it here: "I cannot stress enough that your commitment and involvement in things that concern you and your family are vital to the continued well-being of our school. Remember: 'Together We Are Strong' is not just a logo; it's a fact." And that's through our Parent Association, and staff played a tremendous role in that logo, and there is that appreciation.

The above sentiment expresses the bonds between community and school which I sensed during my visits to Broad Meadows and my discussions with Craig. Mention has already been made regarding parent fund raising, volunteer work in the classrooms, and co-operation when discipline problems arise. The Early Childhood Services Local Advisory Committee is heavily involved with the young children in the program. When parents take their children on extended holidays they ask whether they can tie something educational into their program.

> We've got a lot of kids who are leaving today to Hawaii and Mexico; there are kids going all over the place. We've got a high number of students going on extended vacation periods. The parents contact us, they acknowledge the intent to go, and

> how could they make it an educational trip? And the parents are helping the kids with photographs. Photographs are going to be in a number of rooms after Spring Break.

Because of such trips and the general home environment, Craig claims that the children come to school "experientially enriched." He also believes that parent expectations of the school are high.

> In the area that I know of the expectations and demands, that the school should provide resources that the students are expected to be successful, that the remediation and assistance be provided if necessary. There's a real emphasis on academics here. I don't know whether that's so unique to a rural setting or to this setting. I would say in this neighbourhood, economically parents value the educational experience.

Craig does not expect a one-way partnership. He welcomes parents in the school but also is prepared to make home visits, accept telephone calls at night, and discuss matters with parents whenever he meets them.

> I am available and accessible as much as I can be, recognizing that I teach sixty percent. What it involves is that there are a number of phone calls at home after the instructional day, and that's fine. If one is not available, then one is squelching the access; one has to be flexible and amenable.

He clearly believes that a team approach is the approach most beneficial for children.

> The parents are receptive and open. The Parent Association president and the executive are in and out of the school on a regular basis, almost daily. They volunteer in the school. Any concerns, any comments are broached with me. We sit down together and plan parent meetings; we develop a joint agenda. The feedback is positive. It is a team approach, and that's not only with the parents, but also with staff. It's attempting to develop that sense of community that I think focuses and benefits the kids.

Dealings with the wider community. Being the centre of a rural community some distance from the suburbs, Broad Meadows has become something of a community centre.

> The school is a community centre. The number of community meetings, the school grounds are used extensively by various groups. We have various baseball teams that use the diamonds

> here; the skating rink is used regularly by various groups; our gymnasium is used by the Broad Meadows Square Dancers; we have the various choir groups in the area that utilize the facilities. Broad Meadows as a community is caught up in the Broad Meadows School plant. You wind up being drawn into activities. You wind up being invited to square dancing here; you wind up being invited to--"We're having baseball; do you like to play?" These kinds of things have a tremendous carryover towards the relationships with the parents and the kids as an entirety here, which is great. There's a lot of positive relationships here.

The above quotation demonstrates how a principal can easily become really involved in such a community.

> The integrity of the school is paramount to a lot of the parents here, as they've also attended this school at one point in time. It's an acreage community that really appreciates our rural school setting near to a suburban area.

That quotation goes part way to giving a reason for parent and community commitment to the school. The community centre concept has attracted further interest in using the school facilities.

> I was approached in February as to whether we would be receptive here to having the County Retraining Program operating in the school. In terms of the school utilization factor that's a boon to our longevity, reducing the cost to the system. I view that as a positive use of our rural school, and it would also have spinoff with regards to after-hours use, in other words, maximizing the rural school setting by encouraging after-hours use in the community, as well as through municipal and corporate staff.

Student Developer

Student needs are at the forefront of all of Craig's concerns. His efforts are concentrated on improving the quality of education and care of the students at Broad Meadows.

Students as individuals. Craig's claim that he needs to "go out and play marbles with the kids" is solid evidence that he sees a need to get to know children socially and for them to get to know him. Mention has already been made of the fact that he makes home visits to discuss problems with individual children and that he discusses children with parents whenever he meets them. The school has a counsellor point five time. This ensures that counselling for individual students' problems is available on a planned basis. Problems which arise in the counsellor's absence are handled by Craig or his assistant principal.

Teaching two classes and visiting all classes frequently, Craig gets to know his students academically. He has high expectations of students and believes that students have high expectations of teachers.

> The number of students here that go away and have been on extended field trips is extensive; the number of times students have pictures and photos and stories and things to share from trips, etc. The students have expectations of the staff as well. It's almost a shared expectation.

Craig is not satisfied if students are just working to potential. He likes to see them really extended. "I don't feel comfortable with the idea of, are they meeting their abilities or capacity? I think we always have to keep pushing for, Can they go beyond? Can they stretch? I think they can, and they are."

Craig's concern for student well-being is emphasized by his involvement in bussing. Earlier mention has been made of the fact that he seeks route alterations to suit the medical needs of students, looks after children who have not brought notes regarding change of bus to attend parties and the like, and meets busses in the morning. He said that it is important "with the smaller kids . . . making sure they make it to the bus, making sure that they're comfortable."

Evaluation of students. "Fortunately, I've been able to teach from the Grade One to Seven level, so I am fairly aware of the curriculum and the evaluation strategies." Again, Craig's experiences as a teacher stand him in good stead as a principal. Knowing evaluation strategies at all elementary levels puts him in a position where he can feel comfortable advising staff, and teachers feel that he has the knowledge and experience to help them. Craig described his involvement in student evaluation as follows:

> Teaching sixty percent of the time I'm directly involved in evaluating students that I instruct, but I'm also reviewing on a regular basis the student achievement for the reporting periods, for the interim reports, which are between each reporting period. I'm also involved in the Pupil Services recommendations for learning assistance, counselling. With regards to student evaluation, then, the reporting and evaluation strategies are examined. . . . Teachers are encouraged to keep student files with work samples. It's an ongoing process. It also is another part of the staff meeting agenda--student concerns and behavioral concerns--so we attempt to deal with students and the behavioral problems if there are any, receiving feedback from staff at the staff meetings on both areas.

Craig is well aware of how his children stand provincially, but as described previously, he is not complacent about their performance and expects students to be "stretched."

> We are above provincial average in all dimensions and have been ever since the provincial achievement tests have been implemented. I think they're performing--well, I know--they are performing well above provincial average, generally above system average, as well. The aptitudes and abilities appear to be very high on the standardized testing procedures that are in place with C-CAT and various other options. . . . There is a real emphasis on student achievement and building the self-esteem to perform well.

Craig mentioned that when teachers' long-range, yearly plans are examined by the administration, they "examine the evaluation strategies."

Valuing the worth of students.

> I think one attempts to develop a rapport with staff, an appreciation for each other's strengths and weaknesses, and acceptance that the bottom line is we're here for kids, and let's do the best that we can possibly can.

Craig's belief that "we're here for kids" clearly demonstrates that he values the worth of students. He bothers to go out and play with them at recess time. Evidence of his rewarding good work is clearly visible in the school lobby. The school's discipline policy is further sound evidence that Craig holds children in high regard.

> We're operating on a model of logical consequences, so there are no surprises; it's not an arbitrary school behaviour management policy. It is predictable. It respects the dignity of the student and attempts to encourage problem solving and taking ownership for their behaviour.

Thought for the day. It seems to me that "the thought for the day," given over the public address system first thing in the morning, should be a valuable vehicle for student development. Thinking about, and discussing, morals, fables, or the like help children think about their own ideas and actions. The thought for the day also provides a common "focus for children" in the school.

Innovator

Craig is judiciously cautious in his approach to change, especially in this, his first year at Broad Meadows.

> Really, your first year in a new administrative setting, one does a lot of watching, waiting, attempting to appreciate why things are the way they are, why certain routines and procedures have taken place. Wholesale change I think is not feasible. It's not so much the rapidity of the change; it's the stability that the change will bring over time, and hopefully the enhanced rewards. So I think the first year staff look with some degree of caution, apprehension, as to whether things will be turned upside down.

In describing his approach to innovation, Craig uses the farming analogy of planting ideas and trickle feeding them and marketing them.

> In terms of innovation, I would see my role as attempting to assess where staff are at in terms of professional growth; in terms of their philosophy of teaching; and attempting to recognize their strengths and talents. I encourage staff to engage in self-appraisal; having them see their buy-in in the

> school existence, in the school's current status. I think in terms of being an innovator, one is attempting to examine here what current practices are. What areas do staff feel can be improved? In terms of management of change, one simply adjusts from being reactive in attempting to be proactive. One almost has to view things within the approach of a trickle theory of change, attempting to plant ideas, to market change, to highlight the benefits for kids and for staff members themselves. Attempting to encourage not so much working harder, although it often seems like that, but attempting to work smarter, trying to refine what exists. I see administration reflecting a state of flux in the sense that the administrative ideal has changed and is changing: A benevolent dictator of sorts I don't see as getting the buy-in, the productivity, the self-satisfaction for staff. I elect to empower staff. . . . Change for the sake of change is a waste of time and really very ineffective in utilizing scarce resources.

To be enacted, the above philosophy requires the principal to have developed communication systems to allow it to happen. As described in a previous section of this chapter, Craig has developed appropriate communication channels and networks.

Although Craig has expressed caution in regard to implementation of change, I found evidence of his innovations in three significant areas. Staff were really involved in the budgetary process for the first time. Staff development has been raised in teachers' minds by his encouragement of their working out a personal professional development plan and of their attendance at system-sponsored visits to other schools. He has revised the discipline policy to encourage a more positive and co-operative approach in this matter.

High Priest

Craig had not thought about himself as a high priest. However, his thoughts on the matter, as expressed to me, other things that he said during our meetings, and things that I saw at Broad Meadows led me to believe that he does, in fact, fit Sergiovanni's (1984) picture of the principal as high priest.

> I view my role pretty much on the line of a coach, and I do not come from a physical education background, not at all. I view my role as attempting to not rely on position of authority, more so on knowledge and expertise with the curriculum, with an awareness of strategies, and I attempt to work on a coaching model. My perception of a leader is somebody who encourages people to grow, but I'm probably more along the Confucius line. A leader is someone who leads, but the followers begin to feel that they also lead. I guess that's my approach. It is not a position of power but more knowledge and referent authority in a coaching-collegial model. In terms of keeping the vision alive, I think the vision is the effective school's model and the effective school's research, which drives this system and which is continually encouraging greater and greater levels of staff involvement. Staff are involved in the development of the school goals, objectives, and in helping to devise the criteria for what is being successful, and how to improve.

I found much evidence of the visions of high expectations and team work in practice at Broad Meadows. Students' good work is praised and displayed; for specific meritable actions teachers receive written commendations which can be included in their files; and also, as reported earlier, parents and students have high expectations of the school. Throughout our discussions, Craig emphasised many things which encourage a joint effort to assist children.

> I think we have to encourage that Grade One to Six, each area is unique, but we share commonalities; let's develop that teamwork approach, the coaching, really, staff coaching each other and trying to assist each other in a positive way. So staff development's involved there in heightening the awareness of the resources that this school has, or that other schools may have. So we're attempting to encourage continuity.

The school logo, "Together We Are Strong," exemplifies the expressed joint vision held by parents and staff and is strongly fostered by Craig. "We're here for the kids," he said. He spoke of his teaching role as presenting a "joint challenge" between teaching and administration and as maintaining "a focus" on the main reason for having schools, that is, teaching students. Craig suggested that parents need to have confidence in a principal before they discuss such matters as school vision: "Parents get to know you; they're familiar with you as an individual, and they come in and they talk to you about the school vision, where the school's at."

Chapter 7

Similarities Between Principals' Tasks

Analysis of the data gathered from the three principals shows that the similarities between their tasks greatly outweigh the differences. This is in agreement with what the principals stated during individual interviews:

> Amy: No, I don't think you need a different set of skills [to run a school in a different environment].
>
> Beryl: I don't think the job is really any different [from being principal in another school] in many ways.
>
> Craig (first interview): The jobs, the tasks really are very much the same as in any other elementary school in [this jurisdiction].
>
> Craig (second interview): I think in many ways we're trying to do the same thing, i.e., meet the needs of students.

Organisation of This Chapter

I have looked at each of the themes, and, in some cases, the categories within those themes, and illustrated similarities with minimal comment from me and, on average, two of the most salient, relevant quotations from each of the participants. I have done this to represent their views of reality as accurately, and in as unbiased a fashion, as possible.

I found three overarching themes: the central place of students in each of the participant's thoughts, the need for a plethora of communicatons--visual, oral, and written--in the life of an effective principal, and the bringing together of all strands of a principal's activities in compiling the school budget. However, I felt that any attempt to analyse data along those simplistic lines would be confusing.

Therefore, I am presenting the data under the 10 themes and categories which were used in describing the work of the individual principals in the preceding chapters.

Where a similarity has not clearly belonged to one specific category--and this was often the case regarding staff development and staff supervision--I chose what I thought to be the one most appropriate place in which to include the matter in an attempt to avoid unnecessary repetition and duplication.

The bulk of the data used in this chapter was gathered from the individual interviews, but some is taken from the group interview.

Analysis of Similarities

Instructional Leader

Knowledge of children. Each of the participants makes a genuine effort to get to know individual children's educational needs.

> Amy: We have some very talented children in music, in theatre, and the teachers have been very attentive to their needs.
>
> Amy: In terms of kids, every day I go into every classroom, and I spend anywhere from five minutes to three quarters of an hour . . . but I try to talk to kids.
>
> Beryl: I'm seeing kids who can read and who can write and who can produce.
>
> Beryl: "You go to the staffroom today; I'm going to take your supervision for you," and just go out and be with the kids.
>
> Craig: I'll go out and play marbles with the kids.
>
> Craig: With the smaller kids . . . making sure they make it to the bus, making sure that they're comfortable.

The principal's own leadership. Each of the participants displayed a sound knowledge of the curriculum and strong leadership in this area. This would be, in part, because each had extensive teaching experience in most elementary grades.

> Amy: I'm very strong in the language arts area, and we've come such a long way.
>
> Amy: They inservice the principals as to what is expected: What resources are expected? How do you observe the qualities of a good music program? And so that in terms of curriculum leadership, I can be supportive in that area in terms of resources, going in to observe a teacher and what's happening in the classroom. It's the same with social studies.
>
> Beryl: I think that that's [teaching's] an area where you can put your money where your mouth is.
>
> Beryl: I had a really good chance at the very beginning when I came. . . . I took time to tell them [the staff] a little about the kinds of things that I had done and what I would be looking at.
>
> Craig: Many times I have staff showing me samples of work: "How would you judge this? . . . Should this go home?"
>
> Craig: "If it [the teacher's idea] works, great! If it might work I'll try it, but if it isn't working I'm going to throw it out.

Delegation of instructional leadership. Each of the principals delegates aspects of instructional leadership to staff members to make use of staff strengths, empower staff, to improve programs for children, and to offload some of their tasks.

> Amy: Every teacher has a key responsibility for a subject in this school.
>
> Amy: My Grade Four teacher is very strong on computers. I will route everything on computers after I read it through to him.
>
> Beryl: I have staff members who are assigned to various curriculum areas.
>
> Beryl: And by doing that [involving staff in budget development], you don't ever really have to eliminate anything that people have said [and I got my priorities in].
>
> Craig: The staff member responsible for that [subject] speaks of any changes.

> Craig: "What's your response? Then let's deal with it as a collective in the meeting." So we're attempting in that way to come up with a curriculum consensus.

Staff Developer

Elements of staff development were evident in many activities carried out by principals. All major themes contained some components of staff development.

> Amy: We have a professional development component [in our staff meetings] every second Thursday.
>
> Amy: Betty and I will collaborate on what's happening [in science] and discuss it.
>
> Beryl: Usually that kind of information, unless it's something very time specific, is shared at our staff meetings in terms of curriculum reports.
>
> Beryl: One of the things that the system has been very good about for the most part is providing us with [inservice] opportunities.
>
> Craig: We've attempted to implement a PGP program, a Professional Growth Plan, this year. It's met with some enthusiasm and some degree of apprehension, possibly because it's attempting to have people formally define their professional and personal goals for the year.
>
> Craig: And in terms of staff development, all of our staff meetings are circulated on a rotational basis through all classrooms.

Communicator

A free flow of communication of all types, in all directions, through formal and informal channels and networks, was a feature of the operations of each of these three effective principals.

Visual communication. None of the participants spoke about visual communication. However, in each case it was obvious that it was treated seriously. Clean, tidy, and attractive grounds, buildings, classrooms, and offices; attractive displays of school mottos, thoughts for the day, citizenship awards, safety awards, samples of good work, and sport trophies; and not least, a cheerful, welcoming principal clearly conveyed strong messages to me as they would to the whole school community at each location. Obviously, here were caring people with high expectations of students, staff, and themselves.

Oral communication. All of the principals appear to place great reliance on oral communication as an informal, friendly, and efficient manner of getting their messages across to students, staff, and parents. In fact, Craig said:

> One meets before class, at coffee break, lunch, phone calls; it makes collective meetings quite difficult, except for paper, and you limit that. The more paper there is, the higher the frequency of not being aware, so you keep it to a minimum.
>
> Amy: When we have substitute teachers that we haven't had in this school before we try to greet them and talk to them and tell them that these are the kinds of kids you're up against.
>
> Researcher: During the course of an hour's observation, Amy spoke to a parent, the day care co-ordinator, her secretary, an aide, a teacher, her superior officer, and her personnel officer, all while she was in her office preparing an agenda for a staff meeting and a principal's report for a parents' meeting.
>
> Beryl: Our area meetings--we have one small group meeting each month, and we have one where we meet as a total area, and then we have another system-wide one where we meet once a month. Those are usually scheduled for Wednesday afternoons.
>
> Beryl: I find that my day starts out usually by just the interaction with staff. It could be filling requests for things that they need looked after during the day, or it could be quick conversations about equipment or resources or about children, and that usually takes up most of that hour prior to when school opens in the morning.
>
> Craig: We do a lot of informal problem solving at lunchtime and at recess. If there are concerns we expect them to be brought up. Staff are very stable here. Concerns are addressed usually in that format.

> Craig: We use the PA on a morning basis. We introduce substitutes in the morning, we introduce parent volunteers in the school, special visitors, we provide information on the intramural program at lunchtime, reminders for parent-teacher interviews or milk money or whatever is involved that day, pizza days or hamburger days or book fairs. These events are announced as well as the thought for the day, which is positive and upbeat, and then the kids and the teachers talk about it in the morning.

Written communication. The three participants tend to restrict written communication to more formal occasions, or, as in Craig's situation where he and his assistant principal are rarely in the office at the same time, he "relies on Post-It notes on a chronic basis."

> Amy: Every once in a while I take a little pad along [to the classrooms], and I know what's going on, and then I make a certificate for each door.

> Amy: I try to read through all of them [written correspondence to the school] so that I understand, have a global perspective of what's going on.

> Amy: The write-ups: You have to provide a written evaluation [of staff]. Those are all done at night.

> Beryl: I use a staff memo when it's needed, and that usually happens between staff meetings.

> Beryl: I give them [staff] . . . a questionnaire, and on there I ask them to tell me all of the things that they like that are happening within this school, and also to indicate if there are any of those that they think could be improved on. . . . And then I give them the last one. I ask: "If you had the dollars you wanted, what things would you provide?"

> Craig: I write the school newsletter.

> Craig: Many times it [communication with staff] relies on computer memos. I will draft letters.

> Craig: Then you have to write large reports and explain, "Why are you above the system average?"

Business Manager

When talking about their roles as business managers, all principals spoke mainly about their budget-development processes. In each case the staff was involved, and Beryl also involved parents. This seems to be the time of the year when principals draw all threads of their responsibilities together. It was particularly noticeable at Riverside and Suburbia where Amy and Beryl have control of virtually all aspects of their finances.

> Amy: I have all my staff involved. We meet, and I use a collaborative process. Basically, to start with, I look at it as a V, and we start at the open end of the V, where we're in mixed groups, and we generally look at what the school needs in more global senses. We list those needs, and then I have them switch groups so that the Primary group's together, and the Upper Elementary is together, and all the additional support, like the Library, Resource Room, those kinds of supports. . . . We go back and put those needs in priority and start negotiating. And everybody feels very involved, that they've had a say and they understand.
>
> Amy: The other thing is evaluation of resources in both areas of language arts and mathematics. We have not renewed resources in those areas for five years, so then when we get these priorities down, we go back to the money. Okay, now those are our priorities; we have to have money for that. We match the dollars, then, with the priorities, but the priorities come first.
>
> Beryl: One of the first things I had to do when I arrived was start looking at the budget for next year, and of course when you start getting into that you're looking at what your priorities are going to be in some subject areas and so on, and I had to get busy very quickly and analyse what was happening in language arts, what was happening in social studies, what's available for my staff. In my own mind I've done a little bit of that kind of research.
>
> Researcher: You talked about working with staff on priorities. How firm are you on making sure you get your priorities across?
> Beryl: One of the things that I do for that is to say to my staff--I give them almost like a questionnaire, and on there I ask them to tell me all of the things that they like that are happening within this school, and also to indicate if there are any of those that they think could be improved on. I then take a look: "What are some things that you think very definitely

need improving? Are there any things that really should be eliminated? And if you were to set your priorities by yourself for next year, what are the, say, three main areas that you would address in terms of the school?" Then I give them the last one. I ask: "If you had the dollars that you wanted, what things would you provide?" When I get that, I compile it in such a way that I can say to them, "Here are the things that as a staff we've really felt quite strongly about," and it really comes out quite close in the long run.

Craig: We reviewed how the budget had been arrived at. A number of staff were not aware of how the funds were actually created. We explained it and reviewed those areas where we have flexibility, and staff did provide some suggestions. Staff recognize that they have been making decisions with regards to the language arts, division one series. They've made recommendations with regards to music series, they make recommendations with regards to science materials, science consumables, obsolete books, text replacement. We consolidated that, and staff had the opportunity to provide priorities within the budgeting process. I found staff gained an awareness of how limited the funds are, and I think that led to staff looking at the quality of the decision.
Researcher: They had been involved in budgeting before, hadn't they?
Craig: They had been involved in the development of a wish list, but I think by attempting to provide more than just a wish list, they got a clear appreciation for exactly how many dollars are not allocated.

Facilities Manager

This was one aspect of their work where the three participants agreed they put minimum effort.

Amy: My biggest headache is the physical plant, because mine is old. . . . I don't have the interest in that part of the budget. . . . I'd rather stick to teachers and kids.

Amy: Building manager, oh, that's the part I hate the most about my job. . . . I'm getting better; it takes practice. But I've reconciled with myself the fact that this school is not going to look like my house looks.

Beryl: I put a lot of trust in my custodial staff in terms of the physical plant. . . . I try and make a fairly regular check, just to see if things are done, and I can do that without really even having to meet with those people. You learn to pick up on a few key spots.

> Beryl: If I had the dollars to do it [repairs, extensions], I'd spend.
> Amy: Oh, I would, too.
>
> Craig: As an administrative team, one is aware of the state, the condition of the building. One generally does not have time during the day to be really concerned about the building. One deals with problems . . . on an emergent basis.
>
> Researcher: You're quite happy with them [central office] doing the booking [of the facilities]?
> Craig: Yes. It's another job that I'm just as glad we don't have to look after.

Staff Supervisor

This is a task which each of the participants takes seriously, not only the mandatory, formal evaluations, but also the ongoing, informal supervision. Each visits all classes regularly, "Visible Management" or "Management by Walking About," as recommended by Peters and Waterman (1982, p. 122).

> Researcher: I think, too, that ties in with something I asked the three of you, management-by-wandering-around specialists, keeping your eye on what's happening in classes, and being visible.
> Amy: That's partly through the staff supervision: When you go in to observe a teacher, you're not only observing them in action teaching, but you have to be pretty observant as to what's in the classroom. On their long-range plans, I'm sure everybody here has their teachers turn in long-range plans, and I don't expect teachers to have outlines of long-range plans, because I use those as a basis for discussion with parents. If a parent phones in and says there's something going on in grade five, well, I have those right on my desk in a file folder, and I turn to see, and I'll often check with the teacher to see that that's where they are.
>
> Amy: I've already made it clear to my teachers that next year as part of their professional growth, I will expect them to attend at least one inservice in the new social studies area before it becomes mandatory in 1990.
>
> Beryl: I'm going to be able, I think with several of my staff, to actually work with them individually on some strategies and suggestions for resources that they could use.

Researcher: This has come out from your observations around the classes?
Beryl: Yes. And what I see in terms of what they have in actual resource materials, plus the way that they teach.

Beryl: I think evaluation is another area which really is a fairly time-consuming aspect. First of all, the visits to the classrooms, and I feel in fairness to the teachers that should be made on at least a three- or four-times-a-year formal type of visit if I'm going to be able to write down on paper something that's meaningful and accurate. We are expected to do a written report on every staff member yearly.

Beryl: I think that for the most part the teachers have gained a lot more by doing it [discipline] on their own, establishing their own management skills and that sort of thing, but certainly if they're having difficulty, then I try and set up something, or work with them on some kind of a plan that I think may work with that youngster within the classroom. And that, again, I think is a big part of what my job has entailed here.

Researcher: You do a fair bit of wandering around, management by wandering around?
Craig: A lot of it has to become that. A lot of it is on an ad hoc basis. As you see something, depending upon the salience of it, you address it, and staff appear quite open about that.
Researcher: So your formal evaluations may be based partly on the informal observations?
Craig: No. That can cause a tremendous amount of concern. The evaluation policy draft that is in review will involve giving all anecdotal notes, records, tapes to the teacher. Anecdotal records and any school file retained by the administration must be shared with that staff member. They have access to whatever is in their file, so it cannot be an anecdotal approach unless they also receive a copy of that anecdotal comment.
Researcher: How does the staff here react to your supervision of them?
Craig: There are, of course, system directives that it's to be an ongoing growth process cycle of the Part One Evaluation, which stays in the school, and a Part Two Evaluation, which is forwarded to Central Office.

Craig: Attempting to encourage not working harder, although it often seems like that, but attempting to work smarter, trying to refine what exists.

Public Relations Officer

Amy, Beryl, and Craig each believes that good relationships between the principal and parents and the wider community are essential in an effective school. Each employs a variety of strategies to foster positive relationships with their respective communities.

Parental responsibilities. Each of the participants involves parents in the area of student discipline. Beryl claimed that a small number of parents at Suburbia saw school discipline as a school responsibility, but the three principals believe that a joint approach to problem solving in this area is more successful.

> Amy: I would sooner suspend the child and let the parents and the child deal with the problem and own that problem.
>
> Amy: We drew up a contract which he and his parents have to sign.
>
> Researcher: What's the family support system like in this area?
> Beryl: I would say it's really for the most part very good, that their parents are very supportive. Any of the ones that I've found it necessary to phone or to contact in any way about the child or the kind of discipline that we are going to use with them have followed through very well in what we've asked them to do.
>
> Craig: I've found parents very supportive. Students know that parents are in the school on a regular basis, or they see you at the local Safeway store, the students know that parents say, "How's my son doing? Has he been in your office yet this year?" And if it's yes, they say, "Great! I'll come in and see you next week. We'd better iron this out." There is an ownership: Students are aware that their parents have a rapport.

Parents as partners in education. The three principals see a vital role for parents in the education of their children. However, their role is seen as being limited to giving direct assistance to children in the class, fund raising, providing a stimulating home life, and acting in an advisory capacity with regard to the school's general operations.

Amy: Earlier on I was talking to you about the [parent] role as advisory, that you have to accept what they say and use as much as possible, but you've also got to be very strong about saying to them that you're the professional in education and you know how your school needs to be organised and what curriculum needs to be planned for those children. Those are decisions we make here, and we're not going to be put in neutral and steered around, I guess, is the analogy I can use.

Amy: But in terms of parents here, I spend a lot of time with the School Council on parent awareness sessions. I send home articles in newsletters on various theories and education approaches to teaching, ways to help your children. We've had Parent Forum nights, so they want awareness of what is going on in education. We still have, even though they're well educated people, some people have been through the system, and they think they know the system, but the analogy of "Do you still drive a 1955 Ford today? You know, times have changed as well in education, and we aren't using the Dick and Jane readers like we did once." So there's a lot of time spent in educating parents, too.

Beryl: They [the parents] have a mother who is called a Parent Volunteer Co-ordinator, so that if I need something done I can call her and say, "I need three parents," and she'll round them up.

Beryl: I often would like to think that parents would react a little more to curriculum or to strategies . . . not say that they really wanted something different.

Craig: They provide advice, feedback, support, with respect to school policies, school activities. They are at this point exactly advisory councils.
Researcher: Do you think that'll last long?
Craig: I would think that it's an evolutionary process, that eventually it may become a tiered approach towards any school board within a board, and the administrative role will be much more demanding in the sense that one will not only be examining system policy, but also the rationale for school policy. As the Parent Council, School Advisory Council will be interacting with the board through an umbrella council.

Craig: There's a tremendous amount of parent volunteer work. We retain a Volunteer Parent Log in the General Office. There's a lot of involvement there.

Craig: The children come to school experientially enriched.

Dealing with the wider community. Amy, Beryl, and Craig each talked about their interaction with the people, other than staff and parents on education business, who use their facilities. With Amy and Beryl it was mainly with the people organising child care in their buildings. With Craig, it was other types of community-user groups.

Amy told me that she negotiates the contract with the day-care group, and I witnessed her discussing and ordering equipment which would be put to joint use by the day-care group and the school. The day-care worker concerned commented favourably about Amy remembering to do something about it. The Secretary seemed to sum up the general feeling about Amy when she said, "What a woman! She always does what she says she'll do."

> Beryl: There is an after-school-care program and a lunch program here which operates through the school. . . . and we try and co-ordinate what goes on there, since we share some facilities. So I meet with them occasionally, and there are a few times when they call us down for a little extra help over the lunch hour.
>
> Craig: The school is a community centre . . . you end up being invited . . . which has a tremendous carryover towards the relationships.
>
> Craig: I was approached in February as to whether we would be receptive here to having the County Retraining Program operating in the school.

Student Developer

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, each of the three principals involved in this study saw students as the central issue in every aspect of running the school. Instructional leadership, staff development, and staff supervision aim at improving the programs being provided. Business management aims to enhance the delivery of those programs. Communication, parent liaison, and facilities management attempt to improve the climate in which the students work.

Students as individuals. The importance placed on appropriate counselling services is one of the major ways, but not the only way, in which these three principals show concern for individual students.

> Amy: Right now we have three priorities in this school: One is a Guidance and Counselling Initiatives Program. That was a priority last year, but we're moving into year two with it, and it'll require a year three, so it gives us a three-year commitment.
>
> Amy: I talked about collecting information on students, not only marks.
>
> Amy: I believe very strongly in the student leadership roles in the school, that students behave better if they're given more responsibility, so our Grade Sixes do school patrols outside; they do student secretary: They answer the phone when my secretary's not in the office at noon hour or recess. Last year we had a little boy identified as a writer in residence.
>
> Amy: My biggest complaint about a set discipline policy is that, if we believe that children are individuals, and we treat them as individuals, then you don't use the same consequence for a first-time offender as you do for a repeating offender.
>
> Beryl: And what works for one child doesn't necessarily work for another one, either [murmurs of general agreement], in terms of handling it, so that's behind the way I operate.
>
> Beryl: I liked to put myself in a counselling role with kids.
>
> Beryl: Most of these are parents who are convinced that the smaller class makes up for that kind of thing, and we do integrate here. The children [in the adaptation classes] take music and phys. ed. with the other students. If a child is having difficulty in language arts but can cope with the math program, then he has the math program with the regular grade, so we have a lot of comings and goings from those classes.
>
> Beryl: I help with the intermural program. That's mostly because I'm interested in that, and, again, they need the extra supervisor.
>
> Craig: I go out and play marbles with the kids.
>
> Craig: The number of students here that go away on extended field trips is extensive; the number of times students have pictures and photos and stories and things to share from trips.
>
> Craig: [I do] a number of home visits on behavioural management, sitting down with parents and being in the homes.

Evaluation of students. Each of the three principals is involved in evaluation of students. They are acutely aware of how their students perform in provincial and system tests.

> Amy: I'm very much involved in student evaluation as well. I want to know how teachers get information on those students and carry it on.
>
> Amy: Riverside is usually among the top five schools in system tests.
>
> Researcher: How do these kids perform on the provincial tests?
> Beryl: I would say that we are underachieving, based on the last two years' results.
> Researcher: Underachieving, or just achieving below provincial average?
> Beryl: We're achieving below provincial average.
>
> Researcher: What about evaluation of children? Do you get involved with that?
> Beryl: I get involved only in the fact that I read all of the report cards and sign them. And what we do there is actually a division of labour. My assistant and I each take one division as far as the reading of the report cards. I still sign them all, but she has checked over the batch that she has before she gives it to me. The report cards take quite a bit of time, actually. Again, it is one of those things that when you're meeting with a group of students, it's rather a good chance to see what's happening with them, too. So it's more than just . . . .
> Researcher: More than just signing.
>
> Researcher: What's your involvement with student evaluation, Craig?
> Craig: Teaching sixty percent of the time I'm directly involved in evaluating students that I instruct, but I'm also reviewing on a regular basis the student achievement for the reporting periods, for the interim reports, which are between each reporting period. I'm also involved in the Pupil Services recommendations for learning assistance, counselling.
>
> Researcher: How do these kids do here, Craig, on provincial tests?
> Craig: Well above average. We are above provincial average in all dimensions and have been ever since the provincial achievement tests have been implemented.
> Researcher: And how do the provincial figures compare with the system-wide, IQ-type test that you might do? Does it indicate that they're performing to capacity?
> Craig: I think they're performing--well, I know--they are performing well above provincial average, generally above

system average, as well. The aptitudes and abilities appear to be very high on the standardized testing procedures that are in place.

Valuing the worth of students. Amy. Beryl, and Craig demonstrated that they place high value on the worth of students, individually and collectively.

> Amy: Teachers send kids to my office, and the first thing that the Primary kids do when they come into my office is open the top left-hand drawer of my desk, because they know that if they bring something that they've drawn or written, that I have a sticker box, a cigar box full of stickers in there, and they'll be able to choose one.

> Amy: I finally said to them [part-time teachers] that "I have children and programs to consider *first*. I have taken all your requests into consideration and tried to do the best for you, and you either accept it the way it is, or I will have to just find someone else." . . . But they're good teachers, excellent teachers, outstanding teachers, and I don't want to lose them.

> Beryl: We also have once a month a student assembly, at which time children participate and various grades are assigned to look after them, and then at that time we give out our citizenship awards, safety awards, some of those kinds of things, and it's also a chance to speak to the children as a group.

> Beryl: "For every negative one [child] that you send me, could you send me two that have done something that you really think was good?" . . . I'm feeling that this is something that the kids here really need, a little bit more of the positive strokes than negative ones.

> Craig: We're operating on a model of logical consequences, so there are no surprises; it's not an arbitrary school behaviour management policy. It is predictable and it respects the dignity of the student and attempts to encourage problem solving and taking ownership for their behaviour.

> Craig: The bottom line is that we're here for kids, and let's do the best that we possibly can.

Innovator

There was ample evidence that the three principals are innovators who "look before they leap."

> Amy: I'm a listener.
>
> Beryl: I do a lot of listening, a lot of looking.
>
> Craig: One does a lot of watching, waiting, attempting to appreciate why things are the way they are.
>
> Beryl: And, again, that's something that you play by ear, in a sense, to see when people are ready for a change, and it goes back to that whole idea of talking one on one with, say, three or four people and then hoping their enthusiasm spreads out and envelops other people.
>
> Craig: One is attempting to examine here what current practices are. What areas do staff feel can be improved? In terms of management of change, one simply adjusts from being reactive in attempting to be proactive. One almost has to view things within the approach of a trickle theory of change, attempting to plant ideas, to market change, to highlight the benefits for kids and for staff members themselves. Attempting to encourage not so much working harder, although it often seems like that, also attempting to work smarter, trying to refine what exists.

Each of the above five quotations is taken from individual interviews. They demonstrate very similar approaches to innovation.

High Priest

Sergiovanni (1984) describes five levels of leadership: technical, human, educational, symbolic, and cultural, which make up "The Leadership Forces Hierarchy" (p. 9). All references in this section are to that article. He claims that the three lower levels are necessary if a principal is to run a competent school. "*Technical*--derived from sound management techniques. *Human*--derived from harnessing available social and interpersonal sources. *Educational*--derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling" (p. 6). I believe that the three principals in this study display attributes which cover those three levels of leadership and that ample evidence has been provided over the preceding chapters to prove that convincingly.

> *Symbolic*--derived from focussing the attention of others on matters of importance to the school . . . . *The symbolic leader assumes the role of 'chief' and by emphasizing selective attention (the modelling of important goals and behaviours) signals to others what is of importance and value.*

Touring the school: Visiting classrooms. Each of the three principals excels here, despite two of them having heavy teaching loads.

Seeking out and visibly spending time with students. Examples have been given to show that each principal described does this, on the grounds as well as in the classrooms.

Downplaying management concerns in favour of educational ones. The three principals' comments regarding facilities management support the notion that they meet this criterion.

Presiding over ceremonies, rituals, and other important occasions. Beryl's school assemblies have been mentioned. She acted as Master of Ceremonies at their recent school concert. All play prominent parts in their school/parent organisations.

Providing a unified vision of the school. Each principal emphasises a positive approach to students and has high expectations of students.

> Amy: Most of the interactions with kids are positive interactions.
>
> Amy: What are our expectations for students? We only have two here, that students must be actively involved in their own learning, and we hold high expectations for performance.
>
> Beryl: I said, "For every one negative one that you send me, could you send me two that have done something that you really think was good? . . . The kids here really need a little bit more of the positive strokes."
>
> Beryl: I have high expectations [of children].
>
> Craig: There is a real emphasis on student achievement and building the self-esteem to perform well. . . . I don't feel comfortable with the idea of, Are they meeting their abilities

> or capacities? I think we always have to keep pushing for, Can they go beyond? Can they stretch? I think they can, and they are.

Purposing. "Purposing is of major concern to the symbolic force. Peter Vaill defines purposing as 'that continuous stream of actions by an organization's formal leadership which has the effect of inducing clarity, consensus, and commitment regarding the organization's basic purposes'" (p. 7). By regularly recognising high achievement in academic work, citizenship areas, safety, and sport, these principals are demonstrating a commitment regarding the organisation's basic purposes. The consensus model used by each principal in the budget process is further proof of such commitment. Each stresses that "kids come first."

> What the leader stands for and communicates to others is emphasized. The object of symbolic leadership is the stirring of the human consciousness, the integration and enhancing of meaning, the articulation of key cultural strands that identify the substance of a school. (p. 7)

The three principals in this study regularly communicate their high expectations and positive approaches to students, staff, and parents through their actions, performance at meetings, and written communication with parents. I believe they are good "symbolic leaders" and in many areas extend to "cultural leaders."

Sergiovanni (1984) claims that the "presence of cultural leadership is essential to excellence" (p. 12). He says,

> *The cultural leader assumes the role of "high priest," seeking to define, strengthen and articulate those enduring values, beliefs, and cultural strands that give the school its unique identity.* As high priest the leader is engaged in legacy building, and in creating, nurturing, and teaching an organizational saga, which defines the school as a distinct entity within an identifiable culture. (p. 9)

Amy could see herself, and good principals generally, in the role of high priest, or priestess.

Although Beryl and Craig stated that they do not see themselves in that role, their actions and words would appear to put them in that category. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to aligning their displayed attributes with some items on Sergiovanni's list of leader activities associated with the cultural force as outlined on pp. 9-13.

Articulating school purposes and mission.

> Craig: Teaching is important, because that keeps your focus. You have the same joys, exasperations, that teaching is a challenge.
>
> Beryl: I had a really good chance at the very beginning when I came. We had one of our Thursday afternoon Professional Development days, and I took time to tell them a little bit about the kinds of things that I had done and what I would be looking at, and so on.
>
> Craig: Things appear to be quite positive. I think we're attempting to be positive, constructive, and appreciative of the good things that are happening. I keep anecdotal records of areas where staff make contributions that I am aware of.
>
> Amy: I believe that I have a mission, and I guess I do preach it, more so by modelling than the actual words.
>
> Craig: I think the vision really is the effective school's model and the effective school's research, which drives this system and which is continually encouraging greater and greater levels of staff involvement. Staff are involved in the development of the school goals, objectives, and in helping to devise the criteria for what is being successful, and how to improve.
>
> Craig: Those materials are announced as well as the thought for the day, which is usually something positive and upbeat. The kids and teachers talk about it in the morning.

Socializing new members to the culture. Beryl and Craig have had little opportunity for this in their schools, as both have been in current positions for less than a year. However, there is evidence that parents at Broad Meadows have made an effort to socialize Craig.

> Craig: The Parent Association president and the executive are in and out of the school on a regular basis, almost daily. . . . Any concerns, any comments are broached with me. . . .

They talk to you about the school vision.

> Amy: When I interview them [prospective staff] I try to find out if their philosophy fits the Riverside philosophy.

> Beryl: (Making the effort to be socialized) I like to try and do as many things as possible that I expect them to do along with them. Now, that would be contributing to the potluck lunches that we have, or whether it be the supervision schedule, where I take my turn.

Telling stories and maintaining myths, traditions, and beliefs.

Amy told stories about Riverside's "sassy kids." However, Beryl and Craig had no stories with which to acculturize me, as they were new to their schools.

Explaining "the way things operate around here."

> Craig: I think, in many ways, the Early Childhood Services Local Advisory Council becomes the perfect training ground for developing the rapport, the vision, the shared identity on where the administration in the school would like to see the school evolve, and it's attempting to get parent buy-in and encouraging people to take the leadership roles in the Parent Association so that you can operate on an approachable level.

> Amy: I spend a lot of time with parents telling them that they're an advisory group.

> Beryl: I like to do as many of those things with the staff as I possibly can, even though I know that at some point I may have to ream somebody out, or I might have to do something in terms of some very strong evaluative kinds of things. I think those people are more willing to accept evaluation or accept--I don't like that negative aspect of it, I guess, but it's there, whether we like it or not.

Developing and displaying a system of symbols over time.

> Craig: In terms of vision, our vision really is our logo: "Together we are strong" is more than--and, in fact, it's even highlighted in the Parent Association newsletter, but the parents have said--and I'll just find it here: "I cannot stress enough that your commitment and involvement in things that concern you and your family are vital to the continued well-being of our schools. Remember: 'Together we are strong' is not just a logo; it's a fact."

> Amy: We've had Parent Forum nights, so they want awareness of what is going on in education.

Beryl: It was rather interesting, because before I came I don't know who had told them, but had indicated that I had been responsible for getting the math lab started at my last school. They asked about the chances of looking at something like that here. So there's a seed already there. Then they came and asked if we could, in fact, go over and visit the math lab over there, which we did last Thursday. They were actually amazed at what we'd been able to accomplish in a short period of time. And of course there's a fairly large group that said, "Gee, we'd really like to see something like that put together."

Amy: Teachers send kids to my office, and the first thing that the primary kids do . . . is open the top left-hand drawer of my desk. . . . They know . . . they'll be able to choose one [a sticker].

Rewarding those who reflect this culture.

Beryl: Right now we're doing a fairly heavy unit on literature, and we're having the children do some book reports on the PA in the morning.

Craig: I then draft a letter acknowledging some of the things that I am aware of and my appreciation for their involvement in developing puppet plays and sharing it with the staff or with students, attempting to provide the positive feedback. And then staff receive a copy of that, they acknowledge receipt, they're able to respond and add further comments, and then I place it in their file.

Amy: I try to see what's happening in their room, and every once in a while I take a little pad along. . . and then I make a certificate for each door, for the kids, that tells them I really like their involvement . . . or the writing.

Cohesive culture.

Amy: We've gotten teachers to think about the learning strategies, environments and organizations . . . and we've gotten those in writing.

Beryl: I guess the important part of that is not so much to change the personalities [of the staff], but to change their focus and to change their willingness to participate as a group. This staff are aware of that.

Beryl: And I was excited about a lot of the things that we were doing, so I hope that my enthusiasm can generate some enthusiasm with the staff, and I think it should start with working with two, three, four people; hopefully, that'll be infectious.

> Craig: Our vision is our logo: "Together we are strong." It's even highlighted in the Parent Association newsletter, but the parents have said--and I'll just find it here: "I cannot stress enough that your commitment and involvement in things that concern you and your family are vital to the continued well-being of our schools. Remember: 'Together we are strong' is not just a logo; it's a fact." . . . Staff played a tremendous role in that logo, and there is that appreciation.

Freedom with restrictions.

> Beryl: And I have never looked for total unanimity or whatever you want to think of it, because I think people just have that many different ways of contributing, but I think the core needs to be a cohesive thing.
>
> Craig: Each area is unique, but we share commonalities; let's develop that teamwork approach.
>
> Amy: I'm very supportive of what they do in the classroom, and being specific to Riverside is that if we taught the basic programme of studies as outlined by Alberta Education . . . we'd be in trouble.

Amy goes on to describe how one teacher bases all themes on science and another class is working with inventors located at the university.

Leadership density: Shared leadership functions.

> Beryl: Now, we do have, I mentioned before, those Thursday afternoons twice a month, and our plan is to use those, and I will involve the staff as much as possible in developing them and working for the expertise that they need there, and I see myself as being more of a supportive role.
>
> Amy: Every teacher has a key responsibility for a subject in this school.
>
> Craig: I'm more along the Confucius line, that a leader is someone who leads, but the followers begin to feel that they also lead.
>
> Craig: I elect to empower staff.

I have placed a great deal of emphasis on the very high levels of leadership displayed by Amy, Beryl, and Craig. I have done this to add weight to my arguments based on the next chapter. During our group interview they strongly agreed with what each other had said and what I inferred from what they said regarding those differences between their tasks which appear to be related to specific environmental factors in their individual schools.

Chapter 8

Principals' Tasks Which Appear Environmentally Determined

Although analysis of the data gathered from Amy, Beryl, and Craig, three principals who display very high leadership levels, demonstrates that similarities between their tasks far outweigh the differences, there are some significant differences evident. No doubt some of the differences are due to differences of personalities and operating styles of the three individual principals, but the data suggest that many are a direct result of one or more particular factors in their schools' environments.

The major thrust of this research was to attempt to identify tasks which may be generated by specific aspects of a school's environment. Therefore, the group interview was planned to seek agreement between the three principals on some of those tasks and environmental factors which were identified by either one or more of them during previous meetings with me, or were inferred by me from the data which I had gathered along the way. For that reason, the bulk of the data used in this chapter was gathered at the group interview. Some lengthy quotations are included to illustrate the interplay of ideas which occurred during that meeting.

Organisation of This Chapter

The data is analysed within the 10 themes highlighted in the previous four chapters. The environmental factors specific to only one or two of the schools generated some separate categories within themes. For example, only the chapter on Suburbia Elementary School has the category "Dealing with students in adaptation classes" within the theme of "Student Development."

I purposely selected Riverside, Suburbia, and Broad Meadows as three schools which did not appear to have many environment-specific aspects.

1. Each of the schools is an elementary school.
2. There are two small schools and one large school.
3. There are two suburban schools and one rural school.
4. I thought there were two schools in middle socio-economic- and educational-level areas and one in a high socio-economic- and educational-level area. As it turned out, Broad Meadows appears to be upper/middle, giving a sample of one upper, one upper/middle, and one middle.

During the course of the research I have had to add to the above list as more environment-specific factors were identified.

5. Two of the schools are in one education jurisdiction and one is in another.
6. One school, Suburbia, has three adaptation classes.
7. Two schools are less than half filled to design capacity with students from their own areas, and one has three demountable classrooms so that it can cater to its local needs.
8. Two of the schools, Broad Meadows in particular, have a significant percentage of teachers who work at those schools on a part-time basis.

Analysis of Differences

Instructional Leader

Knowledge of children. Each of the principals feels that it is important to know the children in the school, as programs should be tailored to meet those children's needs. This belief makes educational sense. The only difference gathered from the data in this research is based on the size of the school. It is obvious that it becomes progressively more difficult to know individual children and their needs as a school grows bigger. A principal in a one-teacher school should know each child extremely well, whereas a principal in a 2,000-student high school would know only a few individuals well, some possibly too well, but should still have a good knowledge of the "average" student needs in the school.

For the purpose of this exercise, I proposed that a large elementary school would be one that had a principal with no set teaching load and that a small elementary school would have a teaching principal. I asked the group if that would be a fair distinction.

Beryl: Pretty much, I would think, yes.

Amy: That's a fair assumption.

Some knowledge of students can be gained from provincial and system test results, and each of the three principals in this study placed considerable emphasis on those results.

> Amy: In terms of the students, for me it took a shorter time to get to know students and their families well [at this smaller school]. Like I said, in the last school there were five hundred and forty kids. I knew their names, but I didn't often know what they went home to, or whatever; here I do.
>
> Amy: They score above provincial average, and they're always in the top five in the system.
>
> Beryl: I would say that we are underachieving, based on the last two years' results. We're achieving below provincial average . . . [according] to their ability scores on the Canadian Cognitive Abilities test. They are a fairly average group of kids.

Beryl has been at Suburbia for only five months but is familiar with results from the last two years.

> Craig: We are above provincial average in all dimensions and have been ever since the provincial achievement tests have been implemented.

Craig has been at Broad Meadows for less than a year but is familiar with its results since the inception of the testing program.

Personal leadership. It appears that the teaching role and experience of principals has considerable bearing on the tasks they perform, or how they perform them. Whilst having a set teaching load allows principals to demonstrate their skills, it has disadvantages in that it restricts the principal's time for interaction with the whole school community and forces the principal to carry out much of the administration work out of normal hours.

> Amy: That gives you more credibility with your teachers, because you're on the front line, too, working with students. At least I felt working with a class is more credible.
> Researcher: So principals coming to smaller schools would have to be able to demonstrate that they were very good teachers.
> Amy: Exactly. . . . I think probably in a small school some parents, too, want a teaching principal, and in a lot of ways I probably have more credibility with my teachers as a teaching principal than I would have as a straight principal, because I'm still in the trenches.

> Beryl: I found it easy to compare in that way. Having moved from teaching half time to straight administration, and, yes, that definitely is an area where, if you're going to model at all, it has to be sometimes in different ways. One of the things that I've done with that is actually take some classes for teachers. I've told them I'll give them an hour at any time that they want between now and the end of June, and I'll teach anything from basket weaving to math or science or whatever they want.

> Craig: I think they appreciate the fact that you understand what it is like to have to teach the curriculum and to engage in student evaluation and to participate in the spectrum of student activities. In a way it enhances one's relationship with staff as they realize you are grappling with the same concerns and challenges that they are, and that's a positive.

Researcher: You'd have to be sure that you were doing it well, wouldn't you?
Craig: Yes, it creates a lot of late nights, attempting to be well prepared, because you are visible. Staff are aware of what you're doing in your classes.

Craig: In that sense it's pretty intense, and it certainly does entail quite a great workload. Problem many times with accessibility. Staff interact. If they're on a prep., you're probably in class.

Beryl: I've said that several times, that this is why I think in some ways it's wrong for a principal or an administrator in a small school to have to do as much teaching as they do, because they do still have all of these other paperwork things to do, and sometimes in a way it's even more, because they don't have an assistant to help them very often. They can actually end up having to spend more out-of-school time doing those kinds of things if they're committed to their teaching job as well. So I think that with this, I actually finish what needs to be done within a better timeframe, you know, the total picture of what I do. I still find that it's valuable for me to come in on a weekend day.

Researcher: Being a big school, you haven't got a set teaching role. What difference do you see that makes to your work as a principal?
Beryl: For me it makes a tremendous amount of difference in time, because when I was committed to a group of children for teaching, that to me was really almost in a sense a full-time role as well, and I like to do a lot of fairly innovative things with kids when I teach, and so, again, that's a time-consuming thing. No, I really do appreciate and know that in this school I need all of the time to take care of all of the things that go on.
Researcher: In a small school when you're teaching, the staff can see that you're putting your money where your mouth is, I suppose you could say, as far as your teaching ability is concerned.
Beryl: Yes, and that's very valuable.
Researcher: How do you compensate for that in a big school where you're not teaching?
Beryl: I've been wondering about that, because I think that that's an area where, as you say, you can put your money where your mouth is. And I think what I'm going to need to do here is to say to teachers, "I would love to come in and teach a class today. Can I have yours? And I'd like you to stay." So I think that that's one area that it would be maybe more valuable than saying, "I'm going to come in and watch your class today, and then we're going to talk about what you could have done.

As the majority of elementary school principals were once elementary teachers who probably taught most subjects at several levels in the schools, they may be better equipped to provide instructional leadership at a personal level than can their colleagues in the secondary field. On the other hand, secondary principals may need to employ more skills in delegating, and supervising the delegation of, instructional leadership.

> Craig: I find that staff are concerned as to whether you have taught at their grade level and whether you understand the curriculum and the student challenges at that level. Fortunately, I've been able to teach from the Grade One to Seven level, so I am fairly aware of the curriculum and the evaluation strategies. So that's come in helpful.
>
> Researcher: You three as principals have virtually taught every level in most subjects. Amy, you said you weren't very keen on French and not very good in that area, but do you find that most elementary school principals would have been elementary teachers?
> Amy: For the most part in our system. There has been some cross-pollination in our system, where a couple of junior high principals have, in their words, "come down to elementary."
> Craig: Down?
> Amy: And there have been instances where elementary teachers have been appointed as assistant principals in elementary-junior high schools. There was only I think one instance where an elementary school principal went as an assistant principal to a high school.
> Researcher: It seems to me that elementary school principals generally would have a better across-the-board knowledge of curriculum in their schools than a high school principal, where they've probably specialized in one or two subject areas.
> Amy: Yes, plus it's fragmented, and they have the department heads, too.
> Beryl: I would say that that would be very much the case. And we probably know more about what's going on in junior high, too. [Laughter]
> Amy: We tend to tell junior high principals all they do is timetable.

Staff Developer

Some staff development-related matters are dealt with under the theme of staff supervision.

The only other difference in this area suggested by the data is that small schools may not have the resources, flexibility, or strengths on staff to offer the range of staff development that can be offered in large schools.

> Craig: As a principal in this setting, it's very different from a large school. The resources are much more limited; it's driven by student numbers. Staff development funds are limited.

Communicator

Here, too, the main differences seemed to be caused by the size of the school. Each of the schools studied depended heavily on diffuse and rich communication systems and networks. In small schools effective teaching principals consider their teaching time sacrosanct, except in cases of emergency, and tend to spend more out-of-hours time communicating with their communities.

> Craig: One has to make a conscious effort, even when you're in class, one has to try to balance between going out and playing marbles with the kids at recess, which is what I'd like to do, as well as going and having a cup of coffee with the staff and sharing ideas and developing rapport there. One walks a balance between both, so one alternates; one consciously attempts to say, "Well, Monday, beginning of the week, I better hit the staff room first recess and have a cup of coffee and find out how the weekend went, how staff are doing." Then the afternoon I'll go out and play marbles with the kids, and one has to balance both. It's difficult enough just attempting to communicate with the Assistant Principal; we rely on Post-It notes on a chronic basis.

> Researcher: Have you found much difference in getting to know the staff in a school like this than in a small staff like your last school?
> Beryl: It certainly takes a little longer. I've been able to have a one-on-one conference with everyone, support, custodial, and all of my professional staff, and have made some classroom visits. So it does take a little bit longer, though; I don't think there's any question about that. And I think when you come in new like this, too, they're really waiting to see what you're going to do and what your philosophy is and where you're

coming from.

Beryl: I think probably what you were getting at was the fact that, between the teaching position and full-time administration, the difficulty is getting all the time that you need for doing those kinds of visits and so on.
Researcher: To get into classrooms.
Beryl: I'm sure that that's what you're looking at in terms of the difference in . . . .
Amy: The write-ups: You have to produce a written evaluation. Those are all done at night.

Researcher: One of the other things you said, Beryl, was that you don't really have much more paperwork in a big school than you had in a small school, and that your time is much more your own, did you not?
Beryl: Definitely.
Researcher: You could almost get away without having to work out of school time if you were that sort of person.
Beryl: Well organized and so on, yes, I believe so, because what I was taking home was primarily the leftovers because I had been busy preparing lessons. I'm sure you must find that.
Amy: I do.
Craig: I find going from a school of six hundred and some students, going to a school of a hundred and eighty-eight, the paperwork is identical.
Amy: It is.
Craig: What you say is, though, "Hmm, it's that time again! When do I do it? Oh, it's homework!"
Amy: Yes, homework.
Craig: Sure, Saturdays.

Craig: I am available and accessible as much as I can be, recognizing that I teach sixty percent. What it involves is that there are a number of phone calls at home after the instructional day, and that's fine. If one is not available, then one is squelching the access; one has to be flexible and amenable.

Amy: So what we do operate is an open-door policy, like most elementary schools do. However, I have to make it very clear to the parents that, especially when I am teaching, I will not stop for them . . . unless it's an emergency situation.

Although not restricted to the theme of communication, the mundane tasks that principals have to carry out in small schools can be delegated in larger schools.

Researcher: One thing that came up, too, and I suppose there's no way around it in the small schools, the principal has got to do a lot more of the mundane tasks, like signing forms that

> your secretary might do or your assistant principal might do. [Craig,] You commented on looking after runny noses when your secretary's busy.
> Craig: The assistant principal and I both do a lot of that.
> Amy: Yes, in a small school the principal does it, because there isn't an assistant.
> Beryl: There isn't anybody else.
> Amy: And my secretary is really good at forging my signature on work orders, so I let her do that.
> Craig: Mine is still working on it!
> Beryl: But that comes not just to the paperwork. It was interesting, because we had our school concert on Tuesday night, and I almost felt as if I wasn't needed, which was . . . . They wanted me for Master of Ceremonies, but when it came right down, I didn't have to worry about the PA system; I didn't have to worry about getting the risers into place, because everybody had picked up on a job, and nobody had more than one job to do, and . . . .
> Amy: And in a small school . . . .
> Beryl: . . . in a small school, I was always the one that was running out to pick up the pieces for the PA system or the last to . . . .
> Amy: Making sure the chairs are up and the programs are run and handed out and that the doughnuts arrive and the coffee pot was plugged in.
> Craig: Gee, this sounds so familiar!
> Beryl: But this was one thing, as I said, it was very evident to me on Tuesday night when that program came, because I really felt that I hadn't had to do a lot in terms of getting ready. Not that I minded it a bit, but it was very definitely a difference. So it isn't just paperwork.

The data suggest that some differences between principals' tasks under the theme "communication" are related to the socio-economic and educational levels of their communities. Some apparent communication differences are dealt with under the theme "parent and community liaison." However, I believe that others are dealt with more appropriately in this section.

At Suburbia, Beryl is responsible for the newsletter. At Broad Meadows, Craig writes the newsletter, but parents write one too. At Riverside, parents produce a newsletter, and so does the school.

> Researcher: Who organises that [the newsletter]?
> Beryl: My assistant and I, and then my secretary looks after the compiling and putting it together.

> Craig: I write the school newsletter . . . then run it by the Assistant Principal . . . then give it to the Secretary.

Broad Meadows parents also produce their own newsletter.

> Craig: Our logo . . . [is] highlighted in the Parent Association newsletter.
>
> Amy: A highlight is the Home and School . . . newsletter called Parent to Parent. They've highlighted staff . . . encouraged parents to become involved in various programs . . . . They've had question and answer things . . . parents will come and interview one of the teachers, and the response is printed in the letter.

The above data suggest to me that principals in those schools should approach their communication with parents differently from the way principals in lower socio-economic areas communicate.

Similarly, verbal communication with students may be at different levels in schools catering to very different socio-economic and educational levels. Amy said that "the children are brought up with good manners and [the ability to] deal with a cross-section of people." On one of my visits to Riverside, a group of children was debating the stay-inside-day decision taken that very cold morning. They were able to speak rationally about actual temperature combined with the windchill factor. In some elementary schools the children would just know that it was very cold. In instances such as that reported from Riverside, it would seem that the principal, in turn, should reason logically with the children to support the decision made.

Business Manager

Under the theme of business manager, almost all of the identified environment-specific factors appear to influence the principals' tasks. In this area of this research, the major factor influencing the principals' work was the amount of budgetary autonomy delegated from the board to the school.

> Researcher: One of the things I haven't quite worked out is how much flexibility you have in your budget. I did that a bit with yours today, Craig, with your counselling. What areas do you have no control over and what are flexible? I think you've [Amy and Beryl] said in Metropolis Public you can spend more on equipment and less on staff or vice versa, so you've got a lot of flexibility, it would seem to me. But it doesn't seem as though you've got that, Craig.
> Craig: No, I don't.
> Beryl: You have some fairly good guidelines established, don't you? As you say, so many students, you get half-time counsellors; so many students, you get so much library time. No, that's left to our discretion as to what that balance will be, and looking at our budget when we were doing it, there were two areas that we felt we were lacking in: One was the counselling, and the other was library time, and not a librarian who was going to sign out books, because I have a technician. . . . So that those things are built in there. There, of course, is the limitation that if dollars are cut back, obviously those are programs, then, that get cut.

> Beryl: Even those [schools] that have a reasonable budget to work with are looking at fundraising things in order to add some cream or to add some of the . . . .
> Amy: Frills.
> Beryl: Frills, yes.
> Researcher: Back on budget flexibility, you were talking, Craig, about how your budget didn't cover the essentials within the new curriculum areas. How have you found it in your schools in Metropolis Public?
> Beryl: With the demands that are being made right now, it's going to be a tough area, I think. If a person were going to really go right out and purchase the books, the resources, and so on, even just in what they're asking us to do with computers now, could get quite costly.
> Craig: So, you see, you're phasing things in.
> Beryl: I think even there we're going to have to; we're going to have to decide which is going to be most important.
> Researcher: Because I think you were talking about language arts and music.
> Amy: And social studies next year. One of the things we did in terms of being flexible in our budget is, we have cut back on aide time next year. We've been very people oriented and tried to keep the child-adult ratio at a reasonable level. And what happened was, we cut back a little bit on aide time to revitalize some of our resources in language arts and social studies to an average of about four textbooks per child.

Amy's and Beryl's comments clearly indicated that they enjoyed having control over their own budgets.

> Amy: I love having the financial freedom of handling my own budget, because we fill in what our school needs. Nobody's telling us what we need; we decide.
>
> Researcher: You mentioned getting your priorities and matching your budget with that.
> Beryl: I find that enjoyable, and it doesn't take me very long to do it. I am familiar enough with the budgeting process, with some of the methods that I've used in getting input from staff for both the priorities and for some of their wish lists and so on for supplies and equipment, so that that end of it for me is a fairly straightforward, not a terribly time--I mean, there's a certain time element involved, but it's not a time-consuming thing for me. I like to play around a lot with the figures and just see what I could do if I had shifted my dollars a little bit here and a little bit there.
>
> Amy: Ninety-three percent goes to staff, and that includes support and custodial, and seven percent goes to supplies, equipment, and services. I love the school-based budgeting plan.
> Beryl: So do I.
> Amy: I would not trade it in.

On the other hand, Craig has little flexibility in deciding on his budget, and he does not appear to enjoy this aspect of his work.

> Craig: Now you're speaking my favorite topic [sarcasm]! Economy of scale: When so much of the educational environment is driven by student enrolment, that dictates your administrative time, your counsellor time, your clerical support time, your instructional staff allocation, your library clerk time. Those kinds of factors are so driven, and, of course, your budget, are all driven by the enrolment. One is attempting to provide the same educational experiences, the same spectrum of student learning opportunities with limited resources to accomplish it.
> Researcher: So you see it limiting the range of programs you can offer?
> Craig: To a degree, yes, it does.
>
> Craig: When the budget is driven by student enrolment and there are a number of fixed-cost areas, I sat down and just drafted the existing costs, what last year's costs were, looked at what areas were in the red, in the black, whatever here, and then attempted to look at past cost increase, broke it down, took those areas that cannot be touched as they are--student desk grant, or it's a capital equipment grant or a non-capital

> equipment grant or a telephone subsidy, etc. After taking those items and filling them in, staff received a copy of the budget at staff meeting.

Again, the three principals agreed that small schools can be at a disadvantage at budget time. As in all other areas, their budget is too small to allow for flexibility.

> Craig: I suppose, diseconomy of size and the fact that small schools really haven't got much leeway in any funding or staffing or any area at all. It limits the depth and scope of administrative-task operationalization, and we're attempting to meet as many needs within that reality. There's not a lot that one can do. Central Office is aware, is attempting to provide some assistance for next year, and they are providing limited assistance this year.

In urban or suburban settings schools do have an opportunity to share resources to some extent. Sharing is less of an option in rural areas and would be almost out of the question in really isolated schools.

> Beryl: This whole area of the city, the schools have tried to sort of pool their resources to accommodate these kids with special needs, so that if I have three system classes of this particular grouping of children, another school will have two classes of a different special needs grouping.

Principals in high socio-economic areas are obviously at an advantage over principals in less affluent areas at budget time. Their parents are able to provide more financial assistance, especially when new programs are mandated and budget allocations from boards are inadequate.

> Amy: In terms of the music program and the Musicanada series being recommended, it's a very costly item: It's about four hundred and fifty dollars for a class set of twenty-five texts for each grade level. Our parents did the fundraising, and we have purchased grades two, four, and six, so they have given us fifteen hundred dollars to purchase those textbooks. The music teacher feels that we could use the grade two for grade one and two, the grade four texts for three and four, and the grade six texts for five and six.
> Beryl: That's how you got around that particular one.
> Amy: Right.

Amy probably received that additional funding from parents with little effort. Principals in less affluent areas would probably be deciding whether they could afford to purchase anything for the new music program, and if they did, they would be deciding which other area of their operation would be cut to pay for music.

The following quotations from interviews with Beryl and Craig indicate that there is a difference in their parent groups' ability to assist the school financially. Such differences cause differences in principals' tasks.

> Researcher: Two working parents or normally one?
> Craig: A high number of two-parent working fmailies, yes. And what I find is that one of the spouses is working for personal gratification, as a break, as a way to supplement the income for vacations, etc.
>
> Beryl: As far as the community is concerned and the needs of these children, these are people who are homeowners, probably budgeted fairly tightly; they don't have a lot of extra money and yet are very supportive of the school.

It would appear, too, that elementary schools may be at some financial disadvantage when compared with secondary schools.

> Craig: The Elementary Principals' Association has made presentations in the past with respect to the budget needs of the elementary schools, as the secondary principals have received through Alberta Education a grant through the Learning Resource Distribution Centre in the form of a credit towards purchasing materials. We do not have a grant; therefore, we have serious problems at the elementary level.
>
> Researcher: Craig, you made a comment that in your system there's some discrimination against elementary schools as far as funding's concerned, that high schools have access to additional funding.
> Craig: Not only at the system level, but also in terms of curriculum resources at the provincial level. In terms of elementary, our grants are tiered, so our student grants are not consistent from elementary and junior-senior, so that creates a bit of a concern. We also don't receive the same formulas for coordination time at the County level.

Facilities Manager

There are a number of aspects of principals' jobs in this area which are affected by environmental factors.

In large schools, principals can delegate some of their responsibilities.

> Beryl: I put a lot of trust in my custodial staff in terms of the physical plant. I try and make a fairly regular check, just to see if things are done, and I can do that without really even having to meet with those people. You learn to pick up on a few key spots that'll tell you whether everything that you need is there. So that area, again, doesn't take as much time, because you've put those kinds of responsibilities on someone else.

Whether a school is filled to design capacity with children from the immediate area, or not, also affects a principal's role. Suburbia is filled to capacity and has three demountable classrooms in use.

> Beryl: We're a bit crowded here, so space is a bit of a premium, so we do have to be a little careful about what we book. The staff have gotten used to the idea that if they need a space, of checking between people in setting it up themselves.

Beryl has had a store room converted to a computer laboratory but would also like a mathematics laboratory, a feature that the staff would also like. "Our biggest difficulty here is lack of space," Beryl said.

> Craig: Again, as a former elementary-junior high here, we have a small enrolment. We have a lot of time to utilize the gymnasium; it's not booked a lot of the day. The computer room, there's lots of time periods available there. Staff inform the secretary, and then it's just forwarded to us.

Broad Meadows also has separate rooms for science and art. Further classrooms are being set up for use by an outside organisation.

> Craig: I was approached in February as to whether we would be receptive here to having the County Retraining Program operating in the school, and in terms of the school utilization factor that's a boon to our longevity, reducing the cost to the system. I view that as a positive use of our rural school, and it would also have spinoff with regards to after-hours use, in

> other words, maximizing the rural school setting by encouraging after-hours use in the community, as well as through municipal and corporate staff.
>
> Amy: There's another unique thing about Riverside School. I'm sure we're the only school in the system that has a waiting list.
> Researcher: For students?
> Amy: We have a good reputation, a strong staff, good social services that extend from the school in terms of a day care and after-school care.

The Riverside School building is full, but it accommodates a day-care centre, and over half of the children enrolled come from outside its own feeder area.

A rural school can become a real community centre. That, too, makes changes to the principal's behaviour.

> Researcher: You mentioned earlier, too, that it's sort of the community centre.
> Craig: It is. The number of community meetings, the school grounds are used extensively by various groups. We have various baseball teams that use the diamonds here; the skating rink is used regularly by various groups; our gymnasium is used by the Broad Meadows Square Dancers; we have the various choir groups in the area that utilize the facilities. Broad Meadows as a community is caught up in the Broad Meadows School plant.
> Researcher: So as a principal in a rural school, you're close to all community activities?
> Craig: Yes, you wind up being drawn in. You wind up being invited to square dancing here; you wind up being invited to--"We're having baseball; do you like to play?" And these kinds of things, which has a tremendous carryover towards the relationships with the parents and the kids as an entirety here, which is great. There's a lot of positive relationships here.

I included bussing under "facilities management" because it seemed the most appropriate theme to cover this time-consuming aspect of some rural principals' roles.

> Craig: Bussing is a wonderful joy in a rural setting [sarcasm]. It causes a tremendous amount of challenge. While bus routes for elementary students, excluding the Early Childhood Services, are developed by Student Transportation Services, which is Central Office directed, one deals a tremendous amount with student discipline problems. One

becomes very aware of differing bus driver expectations and approaches to student discipline and school-community relations and parent-student interaction; interpersonal skills become pretty crucial. One does some firefighting in that area. Actually, bussing takes a tremendous amount of time and energy in a rural setting. Parents are concerned, "Well, there's a birthday party. I'd like Johnny to go home on another bus." That causes concerns: You're running things by bus drivers, keeping them informed. Is there a note? Oh, my goodness. One is involved in conflicts between bus drivers, which is interesting, too, where bus drivers are having conflicts, and there are attempts to draw you into it as a principal, as if you wished to be the mediator in something which is beyond your control.

Researcher: How many buses do you have feeding into here?

Craig: Seven, seven at this time.

Researcher: Do they tie up with any other schools anywhere?

Craig: Yes, they feed up with a number of junior highs in the area and transfer points in town, including one of the high schools, so we do feed in on a number of various . . . . For example, in the morning we have a number of junior high students that are dropped off here and wait for their bus, which involves supervision as well to some degree. One also, then, has problems that when they get off the bus, they decide it's time to go for a smoke behind the skating rink shack, so you have to address some of those concerns and forward that on to one of the junior high principals. So bussing is a lot of work. In the Early Childhood Services program you, as principal, the ECS teacher, and the ECS parent volunteer transportation coordinator become intimately involved in the various Range Roads and where the kindergarten bus can turn around and whose yard they can back up into without having a concern and circling areas and trying to reduce dead miles. No one gets paid for dead miles, so it becomes a major task attempting to come up with a bus route that gets students home in a time period when a babysitter is available to look after them.

Researcher: So you're involved, then, in the development and revision of bus routes?

Craig: Yes. In fact, we're also consulted on the existing Grade One to Six bus routes. With regard to student health concerns, that many times involves reviewing with one of the bus drivers the need for change, running it through the Bus Transportation Supervisor at Central Office, distributing letters home to parents explaining the need for bus route revisions and the effective date for the revision to take place. You not only have those kinds of things, but you've also got students that sometimes miss the bus, think they're going to be getting a ride home, they forget their notes, so you wind up having phone calls being made, or students getting lost on the bus with the smaller kids, or taking their bus number on their little lapel and going out with them and making

> sure they make it to the bus, making sure that they're comfortable.
>
> Craig: My discipline burden more is in the area of bussing, and that creates a tremendous hassle. As a matter of fact, that was why I was late [to this meeting]. That's constant; phone calls at home. I had two calls last night, one from a bus driver and one from a parent.

Staff Supervisor

Each of the principals found problems finding time to carry out staff supervison adequately. There was some evidence that it is more of a problem in small schools, and this makes sense, where the principals teach and have little time to observe teachers. It seems that it might be more of a burden to elementary principals than to secondary principals who have a more generous senior staff structure and can use senior staff to supervise.

> Researcher: You talked about a problem with regard to staff supervision. I'm not sure whether you're saying it's a problem to get the time to do it or whether it's some other problem that you see.
> Craig: It is a time problem; it's a time problem. And I've informed Central Office in September of the concern, and I requested additional admin. time.
>
> Beryl: Our own Board has said, you won't be evaluated by anybody other than the one that you report to. So in high schools the department heads are evaluating their teachers. Here, of course, the staff would all report actually directly to me. I would not do the evaluation on my second custodian; that would be the responsibility of my head custodian. As it turns out here, my secretary is not responsible for the aides and the technicians; they all report to me, as well. So in this school, as I say, it happens that it would be all direct. I think what you really need to do is to look even at an elementary school, if they're that big, to look at the equivalent of what would be a curriculum co-ordinator or a department head type of position, and I think that that would be a very legitimate route to go.

Again, a major difference caused to a principal's work as staff supervisor depends on the educational jurisdiction in which the principal works. The following lengthy quotation highlights the differences between the two systems involved in this research.

> Researcher: It would seem that there's quite a bit of difference between Metropolis Public and Grasslands County in the format of your teacher evaluation. Amy and Beryl have to send something in every year, and, Craig, you've only got to send something in every second year.
>
> Craig: Every second year, except Part One is retained in the school.
>
> Amy: So do you do half one year and half the next and half when you . . . .?
>
> Craig: Everybody's done on an ongoing cycle. You're either, one, exceeding system criteria; two, meeting it; or, three, not meeting it, and, consequently, you have a professional growth plan with dates, times, follow up, etc. I don't know what your policy is, but of all evaluation instruments, etc., the original is retained by the teacher, and a photocopy is retained by the admin., copies of everything are acknowledged. That's how it goes.
>
> Beryl: And then we ask our staff if they want those included in their records in the file office . . . .
>
> Amy: Personnel files.
>
> Beryl: The Personnel office. Most times, particularly if it's a positive one, they'll [staff] want that.
>
> Craig: Growth plans are retained in the school indefinitely. The others are portable.
>
> Amy: Ours are portable in all instances, except if the teacher wants them sent down to their personnel file. What happens in the growth plan, it's between you and that teacher, and I as a principal, if I leave Riverside, I can take all those photocopies with me. If the teacher chooses to show the new administrator coming in, that's what happens. That's what our personnel officer told us.
>
> Craig: Ours stay in the school.
>
> Beryl: Ours don't.
>
> Researcher: They belong to you, as principal?
>
> Amy: And the teacher. And if the teacher chooses to share it with the new administrator, they can. Or if they choose to send it to the personnel file, which is accessible to all administrators.

Part-time teachers. Having a significant proportion of part-time teachers on staff appears to be a two-edged sword. Their expertise in specialist areas can be invaluable. On the other hand, organising meetings, actually meeting with individual part-time teachers, or organising mutually acceptable work schedules can cause headaches for the principal.

> Craig: Being a small school with twelve staff, and six are part time ranging from point three to point seven, it oftentimes becomes quite difficult to co-ordinate everyone's attendance except at staff meeting days and on division meeting times.
>
> Craig: Out of twelve staff, I have six part time. They range in time from point three to point seven. People here in the morning that I cannot normally see when I'm in class. One meets before class, at coffee break, lunch, phone calls; it makes collective meetings quite difficult, except for paper, and you limit that. The more paper there is, the higher the frequency of not being aware, so you keep it to a minimum.
> Amy: I have three part-time people--four, actually, because my kindergarten teacher is half time. They make it a point to try and come back to meetings, and I appreciate that. However, one of the things about having part-time people--and I spent all last night--is they want to work part time on their terms only.
> Craig: Limited participation in extracurricular activities, etc.?
> Amy: No, they will do that, but they want to work part time on their terms only. This morning I finally met, and I said, "I'm sorry. I have taken some of your requests into consideration," like, "I'd like two days off if I work half time; I'd like to work two-and-a-half days: two full days and a half day." One gal said to me, "But my babysitter only will babysit mornings." She hadn't told me that before. And I may have tried to work it in, but the way it is, I have an Extended French program and a Music program, so that has to go across five days, the way it's structured. And I finally said to them that "I have children and programs to consider first. I have taken all your requests into consideration and tried to do the best for you, and you either accept it the way it is, or I will have to just find someone else." And, I mean, it's for a position that is point nine seven five. It's almost a full-time position, but there are three people involved, and I would be better off getting someone in almost full time. But the other problem is, these people are too damned good not to consider some of their requests. But I can't meet them all
> Craig: That's right. You're really weighing the problem.
> Amy: I've bent over backwards for these part-time people. My philosophy is that if people are happy at home, they're happy in school, and they do their job better, but I can't solve all their problems for them. . . . But they're good teachers, excellent teachers, outstanding teachers, and I don't want to lose them. But I can't solve--I have broad shoulders, but I can't carry everybody on my back!

Public Relations Officer

The data suggest that principals' interactions with their communities are affected significantly by environmental factors, particularly socio-economic and educational levels of parents and the school location.

Parental expectations. It seems that parent expectations of schools are higher in areas with high socio-economic and educational levels. Although Suburbia is not a low socio-economic- or educational-level area, it seems that parent expectations there are not as high as they are at Riverside or Broad Meadows.

> Amy: Parents care about the well-being of their children, the academic well-being of their children; they want to know what's happening with them at the school.
> Researcher: What percentage, would you say, of your children are from two-parent professional families?
> Amy: Probably about ninety-five percent. When I'm talking about two-parent professional families, they're not necessarily biological parents, but they are two-parent families. We get very few single-parent families.

In fact, Amy feels that she needs to keep the children involved in educational activities that take them beyond the expectations of the provincial curriculum.

> Amy: In the past it's basically been utilization by the Faculty of Education and Phys. Ed., but now we look at the university as a resource that benefits us, too, and they've been very co-operative. So the parents know what's happening, and that's very positive, so they don't become as meddlesome. I think maybe in that sense we try to keep one step ahead of them so they don't ride us all the time. But it's very rewarding for us, too.

Craig sees Broad Meadows' parents as demanding, but seemingly at a somewhat lower level.

> Researcher: Are the people on acreages mainly professional-type people or what?
> Craig: In this area, this is a suburban-rural, middle-class,

> upper-middle-class area. The parents are generally well educated. The SES variables here would be pretty high, very demanding of the school and the programs.

There does not seem to be the expectation that the school will extend students beyond provincial curriculum levels as is the case at Riverside.

> Researcher: I was wondering whether possibly the way parents relate to the school is one area that's seen as a bit different about a high SES, low SES.
> Craig: I'm not sure, except in the area that I know of the expectations and demands, that the school should provide resources that the students are expected to be successful, that the remediation and assistance be provided if necessary. There's an emphasis on academics here. I don't know whether that's so unique to a rural setting or to this setting. I would say in this neighbourhood, economically parents value the educational experience. Yes, I guess there is a difference, if I can compare it with a less-advantaged area.

Beryl sees the Suburbia parents as generally accepting the levels of education provided by the school.

> Beryl: I don't see the pressure here that perhaps you people have in terms of the high expectations, other than a few parents. They pretty much accept what's going on as being the thing.

Amy's comments suggest that the parents' high expectations put some pressure on principals to be actively seeking ways to improve the educational offerings of the school. That feeling is also supported in the next section of this chapter.

Levels of parental involvement in schools. Each of the schools enjoys a high level of parent involvement. However, there is a difference, perhaps only a subtle difference, in the depth of involvement, apparently dependent upon the socio-economic and eduational levels of the parents. It seems that the middle-class parents are happily involved in volunteer work in the school, while the more highly educated parents want a say in curriculum matters.

The levels and types of involvement that parents want in schools have significant bearing on principal behaviour, if principals want to be effective. Beryl's comments are particularly salient, as she has recently moved from a school with high socio-economic and educational levels to this middle-class school. She sees differences.

> Researcher: It seems to me there is more of a--the parents are willing to be involved with more of a physical help than a mental involvement.
> Beryl: Here they've asked that they just call the Parent Advisory Committee, and they will meet about four times a year, and it's usually to discuss, say, a fundraising event or to work on the budget items and so on, which they've had some prior information on. And the message has been really quite clear, that they would rather not have too many meetings and that they were quite happy to be informed by newsletter, and they seem to be reading them.
>
> Beryl: There are parent meetings to attend. We don't have right now a very official Parent Advisory group. They have some officers in name, really, only, but when those meetings are called for discussion meetings and so on, it's done by myself. Parents are invited to come.
>
> Beryl: I also gave that kind of a questionnaire [regarding budget] to the parents . . . . What do you like? What would you change? And what do you see as some of the things that need addressing? And the response was not great; there weren't a lot of those responses that came back. But I really feel very strongly that if they had had major concerns, they definitely would have used that opportunity to have said something. So it's quite different [from my last school in a high socio-economic area] and, of course, quite a different setup, and then they don't have any input into the hiring of staff or anything like that, like the parents did over there.
> Researcher: Some pluses and some minuses in the differences?
> Beryl: That's right, that's right. I often would like to think that parents would react maybe a little more to curriculum or to strategies, or at least maybe not say that they really wanted something different, but were willing to say, "Well, why are you doing this?" or "Could you explain to us why this particular procedure works better than another?" I suppose that could be a nuisance, too, but I like to think that they would question what we do. At any rate, that's the kind of parent involvement we have here.
>
> Researcher: How do you find it? Do you enjoy it, or do you miss the parent interaction there?
> Beryl: There are a lot of parents; that kind of interaction I actually miss, and yet I see the way the parents are being used here in terms of the volunteers and so on, that it's a very,

> very meaningful thing. I know that my teachers appreciate it extremely, and these people have been committed in such a way that we knew that every Tuesday morning these are the parents that are going to show up, or whatever day it happens to be. We've even got a few grandmothers that come in on a regular basis, so it's a good feeling.
>
> Researcher: One of the things we've talked about a couple of times is the difference in the parent involvement. It sounds like it might be a fairly subtle difference between here and your last school, but I think--let me put it this way: It sounds as though at your previous school, particularly with the Faraway group, those people were very involved in saying what sort of program they wanted, and I think you probably get that at Riverside. Here, the parents are simply not saying that; the parents are saying, "We'd love to help."
> Beryl: That's the way I see it here.
> Researcher: That's sort of more physical help than mental help.
> Beryl: That's right. I think, from what I've seen so far, they actually have it. They have a mother who is called a Parent Volunteer Coordinator, so that if I need something done I can call her and say, "I need three parents," and she'll round them up.

At Broad Meadows there is still a strong volunteer parent group, but there is also a hint that parents want to become involved in developing the program.

> Craig: We have a matrix of parent volunteers for each room, what they're into, and whether they're interested in certain grades. It's colour coded and everything else. We just pick those up and carry them through the school. Going through the parent group, they love being called, and so it's gone over well. We do our own questionnaire, too.
> Researcher: Similar, I think, involvement with the programs--in yours. You [Amy] mentioned rechannelling energy and the science program. Craig, you mentioned one parent who thought there should be more track in the school, and when she found out what was involved in doing it, she didn't really follow up with the offer. [Laughter]
>
> Researcher: Do they want to become involved in telling you what your programs should be?
> Craig: I've had one situation where a parent would have liked to have had a more vigorous track team that would stretch throughout the entire school year. I viewed that as a real positive. I said, "Great! We'd really appreciate your help. Would you like to volunteer and become the co-ordinator?" And she said yes. We've sent the information to her, and we have not yet received a response. It's a little more complex many

> times than what people appreciate in terms of developing training schedules and timetables and arranging parent drivers and getting parent consent forms, etc. That's been the only area where there has been a parent concern to say, "Hey, I would like to see this offered." It was explained what kinds of factors were involved, that it becomes progressively more difficult to ensure student attendance and commitment, as other programs in the school are taking place, such as our music program, our science fair, those kinds of areas.
>
> Amy: Those are decisions we make here, and we're not going to be put in neutral and steered around . . . . We have to stick by our convictions very strongly. In terms of parents, we've had to learn to rechannel energy, and in that we've done the education forums for parents. What I've also tried to do with our parents is educate them in the ways of the Metropolis Public School system. Each school has a key communicator, and I really push my key communicators to attend the public meetings.
>
> Amy: And the other thing that, for the last two years, has been a highlight is, the Home and School has put out a newsletter called Parent to Parent, and they've highlighted staff, through staff profiles. They've encouraged parents to become involved in various programs for parents that are offered after school here and by our Centre for Education. They've had question-answer things in that newsletter: What is extended French? for instance, in the newsletter. And the parents will come and interview one of the teachers, and the response is printed in the letter.

Parents as partners in education. I see this area following similar lines to preceding sections. It seems that Suburbia parents are compliant, rather docile partners who are more than willing to help in any way in which Beryl seeks their assistance. This can be a partnership which is extremely beneficial to the school, and possibly a more comfortable partnership for the principal to live with than what Amy experiences at Riverside. I see Amy having to hold the reins of leadership firmly to provide some direction to parents who are eager to take the bits between their teeth and race off in various educational directions. Craig seems to sit somewhere between those two positions.

Beryl: Teachers have developed volunteer programs within their own classrooms, where they have committed parents who will come in on a regular basis to work with the children, to do xeroxing or chart making or bulletin boards, all of those kinds of things. Again, I think they're telling us that "We accept what you're doing as okay, and this is how we can support you and give you more time to work with our kids." I don't think that they would hesitate to let us know if they didn't like something, and they're given that opportunity.

Beryl: This group of parents has been very, very supportive in terms of some fundraising and volunteering, those kinds of things, but have really indicated to me that, unless there's something really important, they'd just as soon not have meetings: "If you've got something very specific that you want me to do, whether it be sewing choir capes or if it's coming in xeroxing, or whether I need some help with a one-on-one with a student, no matter what the volunteer area is, we're there to do it for you. But we'd just as soon avoid meetings."

Craig: The Parent Association president and the executive are in and out of the school on a regular basis, almost daily. They volunteer in the school. Any concerns, any comments are broached with me. We sit down together and plan parent meetings; we develop a joint agenda. The feedback is positive. It is a team approach, and that's not only with the parents, but also with staff. It's attempting to develop that sense of community that I think focuses and benefits the kids.

Amy: First of all, the children's basic needs are met; we don't have to worry about food, clothing, or shelter. In a lot of instances their emotional and social needs are more than met; sometimes children are overinvolved and overindulged, and I guess sometimes that can be a problem, and we discuss that with parents, where there's got to be a balance.

Amy: We have a very active Home and School, and they like to give us advice about what priorities the school or what direction the school should be taking. As a principal, that's a very difficult position to be in, because if you're going to say yes to anyone, you probably will be pulled in a hundred and thirty-five directions, because there are a hundred and thirty-five families. You have to be very careful. I spend a lot of time with parents telling them that they are an advisory group, and I will consider their advice. However, I am the professional, and my teachers are the professionals, and that when it comes to school organization and planning for learning, we do the best we can with the knowledge we have of the children. They can accept that. You also have to be very careful there, too, and sometimes you have to be honest about the advice they give you and accept it, because you want a partnership in education, and if you keep listening to them but never taking their advice, it becomes another "Oh, well, here

> we go again." One instance was, we have a very high number of professional women; you know, being two-parent families, half the families are women. [Laughs] They had some concern about women in science and technology, and what kind of a program were elementary schools promoting in science? It was minimal and not strong, and for two years we took science as a direction for this school, and our kids are pretty wise. We've also had those parents participate in demonstrating their expertise as scientists to the children in the school. So it's working, that partnership.

Parents coping with problems. There are indications that parents with higher socio-economic and educational levels are more able to cope with their own problems and less likely to bring those problems to the school. On the other hand, dealing with problem parents who are well educated is not an easy matter for principals, either.

> Researcher: You also said, Amy, that you felt the parents were much more able to cope with problems.
> Amy: Yes, I think they have the resources; they have the financial resources and the human resources and the knowledge to know where to go, whereas I was in a lower-income school, or the people coming to it, and they didn't quite have the financial resources . . . .
> Beryl: And that's more the case here.
> Amy: . . . or sometimes the familial support to back them up, not that they didn't want the help, but sometimes that the school was the only place they have to go for help because they didn't know where else to go.
> Researcher: When a lot of parents are university professors, they know who to go to.
> Amy: That's right. They access; they help themselves, and they have the money to pay for it. It's not that, say, Beryl at this school can't access the help, because we have excellent consulting services in terms of social workers and reading specialists and psychologists; it's just that sometimes access isn't immediate.

> Amy: I did have an abused child from a double-Ph.D. home--the only difference is, they cover it up better.
> Craig: More sophisticated cloaking.
> Amy: And they get out of it better.
> Craig: Oh, yes, adept.
> Amy: That's right.
> Craig: A master wordsmith.
> Amy: If you're not strong as an administrator, I would have quit, but I believed in those kids so much that I didn't. The father called me up, and he accused me of slandering the home, said it was none of my business. I just stood my ground, and I

> said, "I'm sorry. I'm concerned about your children: It's affecting your children in school." One was coming with bruises as well. One had also told me that the parents have separated and the father was emphatic that they were living in a one-family home. Two weeks later he did call me back, and he did say that, in fact, they had not been living in the same home for months. He, in fact, lied to me. I didn't call him a liar; I'd love to have called him a liar.
> Craig: You just say he rearranges the truth; that's one we use all the time.
> Amy: They're more adept at trying to hide the problem.

The school as the community centre. Data gathered support the generally accepted belief that the rural school can be the hub of the community. Where this occurs, the principal will need to be turning at the same speed as the rest of the wheel, or much faster if he or she is at the rim rather than the hub.

> Amy: At Riverside I'm not so much invited as I drop in. If I'm working at the school and there's a soccer game on the field, I go out and watch the little guys and talk to their parents, and then I go into the school. We do have a unique population in that over fifty percent of our kids don't live in the Riverside area.
> Craig: Bussed?
> Amy: No, they're driven in. Their parents work at the university, and the social services at the school are excellent with the daycare and an after-school care, and so we have kids from the furthest north to the furthest southeast and the west end of Metropolis. Because parents want to maintain some sort of relationship with the Riverside School, often their kids are registered in the Riverside Community League games, so they do come back to the school.
> Researcher: I think there is that difference with the country, that the school is really the community centre, where the square dance people meet and everything's . . . .
> Craig: Square dance, the hockey, the fastball, the community soccer; everything really runs around the school. We've got all the community notices, because it's right there at the school.
> Beryl: That's a little bit true here, too, because we are much more a community school in that sense, and I have a key to the skating shack, the rink shack, and that sort of thing; and the gym that's used here every night from five to ten, it's all community league activities.
>
> Researcher: So it's more of an ownership and a community centre than you get in the city, even though you might have a community school in the city. It's not really the hub of the

community that a school in the bush is--not that Broad Meadows is the bush, but . . . .
Amy: Of course it is! [Humour] No, the malls are here.
Researcher: Yes, I think that was the point you made, too, Craig, that kids can't go down to the shop after school.
Craig: A lot of the parents moved to Broad Meadows because of the rural environment--to get away from city problems.
Amy: But I'm not being facetious; I really am not. This new mall right here, near to this school, actually has community space in it and reading rooms. There's a swimming pool in that whole area, so basically . . . .
Craig: For organized activities, yes.
Amy: Yes. And, being facetious, the mall is the centre of--even in my off-working hours.

Craig: I would say one [difference] would be the intensity and regularity of parent involvement. Parents get to know you; they're familiar with you as an individual. They come in and they talk to you about the school vision, where the school's at, what they'd like to see offered.
Researcher: Why do you think this is specific to this type of school?
Craig: I think there's an ownership here due to the close community ties with the school, the stable parent-school environment. Some of the students, their brothers and sisters have gone through here; their parents have attended this school.

Craig: There's a real accessibility here that I think is very strong. There's an intense interest and a commitment to the continued well-being and existence of this rural school setting. It could well be driven by the fact that there has been a number of perceived threats to the continued well-being of the school. Parents feel comfortable here because they do not perceive the threats of the urban environment: We don't have the amenities such as the snack bar, the 7-Eleven, the video arcade in this environment. Students are captured from home onto a school bus, parents pick them up, and when parents pick their kids up they come into the office; they sit and have a coffee, visit with staff.

Craig: I went to a baseball game last night; I went to another one--I wind up being invited to the square dancing and wind up being invited to all the activities, and you make a point, you are there. You're invited; you're expected to be there, and, yes, you are there. And what it does, it brings about a lot of rapport, good things, with the kids, too, and parents.

Researcher: How would you describe the parent involvement in this school?
Craig: I would say it's vigorous as emergent issues develop, whether it be the Energy Resources Conservation Board and the powerline issue, whether it be the proposed dump site of last

> year by the City of Metropolis, whether it be a change of junior high boundaries, which Broad Meadows is a feeder school for. Those kinds of issues generate a tremendous amount of parent activity and involvement in short order.
>
> Researcher: I was taking a look at one of the other schools in town, too, that was in the same boat. The principal has to develop strategies to help the community keep its school open.
> Craig: Right.
> Researcher: Even though you know it may not be economically viable.
> Craig: And, in reality, it isn't. That was acknowledged at one of the boundary meetings, that the board supports our rural schools, rural neighbourhood schools, and consequently they are prepared to keep this school open. So in many ways it is a political initiative to maintain the school.
>
> Craig: This school exists, in my mind, not due to its economic viability, but more to its service to the public, to its publics.

Student Developer

As could be expected, this is another area in which environmental factors affect principal behaviour.

Counselling students. Each of the principals in this study placed high value on counselling to assist individual students. There seemed to be little evidence to show that principals' counselling roles varied greatly depending on environmental factors. Some minor differences did emerge. It appears that principals in smaller schools may have to do more counselling than their colleagues in larger schools. Principals' counselling roles vary according to their school jurisdictions' policies, and secondary school principals may have less personal involvement in counselling than do their elementary school colleagues.

> Researcher: With Amy and you, [Beryl,] we talked a lot about counsellors. Craig, you've got a point five counsellor on staff, even though you're a small school. I was wondering, is that by staff choice, or is that a county policy?
> Craig: That's county minimums.
> Researcher: You made the comment, Amy, that you'd love a

counsellor, but you'd have him for such a short time that you really wouldn't get much value, because you would have had to address the problem yourself before the counsellor showed up.
Amy: That's right. Also, I think there's a philosophy in this system of preventative rather than crisis counselling, so they want to use the proactive Affective Education courses. And just because we don't have a counsellor appointed at our school, we're on a guidance and counselling initiatives program, where we're learning how to use the Affective Education programs in the classroom, and that has worked very well for us. We've also had greater access to community resources, the university clinical . . . .
Craig: The testing center?
Amy: Not only testing, but they do counselling.
Beryl: And the walk-in clinic.
Amy: They do counselling as well. So with the type of children we have, their basic needs are all met, and in a lot of cases they're very emotionally stable. In the five years I've been at Riverside, we've had two cases of crisis counselling, so it's dependent on the type of population you have.
Beryl: Very much so.
Researcher: Beryl, you're having yours half time on staff next year?
Beryl: Actually, I think we're going to be very fortunate: We're going to have someone on staff who is a counsellor plus will be full time at the school, so we're on our way. And we're looking at all of these programs as well. We've been doing Living Skills this year.
Craig: Our elementaries [schools] all have a minimum of point five. When I was at a larger school we had one and a half counsellors. Again, it is triggered by enrolment, but that's a minimum, but we're into the Affective Ed. in the room too.
Beryl: Ours has been a budget item, because, obviously, if we pay for a point five counsellor, then we either have to increase our class sizes, and for the most part it's built in.
Craig: Yes, that's right.
Researcher: Just staying on the counsellor for a while, do you see the size of the school affecting the way the principal works because of having a counsellor or not? In your case, Craig, it probably doesn't, because you've got them built in.
Beryl: Well, I think, probably, like Amy, that counselling isn't something that can just happen on a regular plan; it needs to be done sometimes instantly, sometimes a very much deliberate kind of thing over a period of time, so, unless you've got someone around all the time, what happens then is that the principal becomes that person who has to intervene or has to take on that role. And I think that that's what's happening, if we take a look at the counsellors within our system, are the ones that identify counsellors: they all have asterisks beside them, because they're also principals.
Amy: That's right.
Researcher: From your knowledge of the systems for here, would

> you see a big difference between elementary and high school with the principal's role in counselling?
> Beryl: Well, I would think so, because if you take the junior high next to us, they have a full-time counsellor, and I think that that's the case with most of the junior highs. Again, numbers would have some effect on that, but most of them try to. What they've done here as well is that, like with my neighbouring high school over here with their headmasters and some of the others with their assistant principals, they're assigned a certain number of students in the school who are their responsibility, and so that takes part of the counselling role with children, but there is a counsellor as well.
> Researcher: So there might be more of a difference between elementary and high school and . . . .
> Amy: Junior high.
> Beryl: Very much so.

__Organisational flexibility__. The data suggest that big schools have more flexibility to offer more appropriate education for individual students than do small schools.

> Researcher: Did you find, Beryl, when you moved from the small school to the big school that you just had that extra flexibility where you can do a bit more for kids as a whole?
> Beryl: Definitely, just in the sheer number of people that there are to do all of the different jobs, and you can do different combinations of students.
>
> Amy: Getting back into small elementary schools: In terms of students and teachers, teachers have no choice but to accept some students in their classrooms, and students have no choice but to accept the teacher that's there; there isn't that flexibility for movement.
> Researcher: So you've only got one Grade One class; the teachers and kids have no choice.
>
> Amy: One of the things that I'd like to pick up on what Beryl said, in terms of flexible organizations for student learning: In a small school like Riverside, kids have to be together because there is only one grade at each level, and it can be good in a lot of ways, but sometimes there are some combinations that just don't work. And in a large school you have the flexibility to do appropriate, or __more__ appropriate, organizations to meet individual needs, whereas in a small school that doesn't happen as easily.
> Researcher: Separating kid from kid or child from teacher in some cases.
> Amy: That's right.
> Beryl: Right.
> Craig: You find your kids are going from one grade to the next as the same core group?

> Beryl: Yes, yes.
> Amy: And in the case of--well, I'm sure that happened at your other school, Beryl, but in our case some of those kids have been together from the time they're two-and-a-half years old, because they came across the hall from daycare into kindergarten, and now they're graduating from grade six. Our first daycare babies are graduating this year.

Dealing with bright children. The data led me to believe that children from areas enjoying high socio-economic and educational levels perform better educationally than do their age peers from less affluent areas. Principals in the former type of schools need to ensure that their educational programs are different from those in schools where children perform at, or below, provincial averages.

> Amy: We just got our results from the Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test, which is an I.Q. test, and the system average . . . was about a hundred and six right across, and at Riverside the average is over a hundred and twenty in all three areas. Those children need to be challenged. Otherwise, you get the behaviour problems.

> Amy: "Riverside kids are sassy. They're always asking questions." And I thought about it and, yes, they are, but they're genuinely curious, and you have to be able to tolerate that.

> Amy: I'm very supportive of what they do in the classroom, and being specific to Riverside is that if we taught the basic program of studies as outlined by Alberta Education at this school, we'd be in trouble, because our kids are in a lot of ways very gifted children, not necessarily all the time academically, although a lot of it is, but we have some very talented children in music, in theatre, and the teachers have been very attentive to their needs, and they've enriched programs.

> Amy: We've tapped the university resources at the Faculty of Engineering this year--the grade fours are doing a unit on inventors and inventions, and we have asked people to come forward and identify themselves or parents to help identify researchers and inventors there. And we're sending them out now in May in groups of four to research labs, different inventors, a man that works with lasers and has retained a patent lawyer, so it's very interesting. In the past it's basically been utilization by the Faculty of Education and Phys. Ed., but now we look at the university as a resource that benefits us, too, and they've been very co-operative. So the

> parents know what's happening and that's very positive, so they don't become as meddlesome. I think maybe in that sense we try to keep one step ahead of them so they don't ride us all the time. But it's very rewarding for us, too. Zoology had an expert on primates as a guest at the university lecturing their students, and we got permission for one of our little grade five boys who was doing an independent study on chimpanzees to attend his lecture, and it was great.

Students' results in external tests also generate differing work loads for principals.

> Craig: You probably are able to have your teachers' perception check in terms of student achievement, curriculum alignment, content matrices, standardized testing school based, which probably gives your staff a better benchmark of where they're at.
> Amy: They're depressing, because what happens in this system is, then they're ranked.
> Researcher: It's not depressing for you [Amy]. Think how depressing it is for schools at the other end of the scale.
> Beryl: And it's interesting, because it wasn't depressing, it was very ego building as far as my last school was concerned, but it's not here, because we're below . . . .
> Craig: Are you below provincial standards?
> Beryl: We're below, and that's a little touchy issue between my grade threes and sixes, because they think they get the blame.
> Amy: We get system marks that are ranked, and we get the provincial ones that are ranked.
> Beryl: And then we get ranked on where our IQ average is compared to the rest of the system, as well, so you can compare that.
> Craig: We're not into the IQ; we're into provincial, and we're into school system, and we have liaison and monitoring. God, we are well above provincial average! But I thought, "Oh, great! Super!" Then you have to write large reports and explain, "Why are you above the system average?"
> Beryl: That's what happened to us when I was at my last school.

Dealing with children in special education classes. There is no doubt in the minds of the three principals who participated in this research that having special education classes in schools affects principals' workloads.

> Researcher: Having Special Ed. classes in a school, what additional work does that make for a principal?
> Beryl: There's a lot more documentation and arranging for

> testing of these children; there's more involvement with support staff, people like therapists, psychologists, all of those, and that's the big area there.
> Researcher: And with their parents?
> Beryl: Yes, with the parents as well, yes.
> Researcher: You implied, too, that they [special class children] constituted a fair number of your discipline problems in this school.
> Beryl: Yes. Now, there's no question that that group take a larger percentage of time.
> Researcher: More than their numbers warrant?
> Beryl: Yes.
> Researcher: Do you find yourself having to become more familiar with various IQ tests, personality tests, and all that sort of thing?
> Beryl: Yes. I have come across some new ones that are used with this group of kids. We've got a very good Student Services team here, so that a lot of that kind of thing is turned over to them, but, of course, we have to interpret the results and make the requests in terms of funding and all of those kinds of things.

> Researcher: Do you see having those sorts of classes in the school making a difference in the principal's job?
> Amy: Definitely.

Student discipline. Throughout my discussion with these principals, they suggested that children from different socio-economic strata pose different discipline problems which principals would have to handle differently. When asked about the matter at the group interview, they did not support the inferences I had made from what they had told me. I firmly believe that I correctly interpreted what they said. I wonder whether they responded as they did at the group interview because they would like to believe that all children are equal. The long quotation in the previous section of this chapter indicates that Beryl was reluctant to relate special education classes with additional discipline problems. I believe that the following quotations support my contention.

> Amy: I think it entails teaching students to have that responsibility, and, again, at Riverside, because a lot of the children have been brought up with relatively good manners and dealing with a cross-section of people, the discipline policy

here is quite open. It basically has two statements: Use guood judgement, and use common sense.

Amy: I think the things I've talked about that are specific to this kind of school is the discipline policy, because in another school I might have to relook at it and do it in a different way. Specific to this kind of school? I believe that probably every teacher should run an enriched classroom to meet the needs of students, but in this case at Riverside the enriched classroom is for every student.

Amy: I had lunch with a colleague last week who's in an inner-city school, and he said, "I could never handle Riverside ever." I looked at him, and I said, "And I couldn't handle your school, thank you." I would find it very difficult in an inner-city school.
Researcher: You think you need a different set of skills?
Amy: No, I don't think you need a different set of skills. I don't know how to say this without incriminating myself. I'm a hard worker, but I'm a hard worker intellectually, I think, more so than physically, and the same set of skills that I use at Riverside I'd probably have to translate into more physical labour in an inner-city school. So maybe that's how I differentiate it. My mind is always going, and I'm sure his is, but it translates into channelling his energies differently than mine.

Researcher: Craig, do you see the SES levels affecting discipline the way one works in the school or the different problems you have with discipline in schools?
Craig: [big sigh and pause] If I compare where I'm at now to where I have been, the discipline problems that I deal with now appear to be so [exclamation, meaning very minor] compared to the past, but, of course, my discipline burden is in the area of bussing.

Beryl: I think here I have to deal with students on this whole discipline area more than I have done anyplace else. That's one of the things that I've noticed here, and I'm not quite sure why. I guess maybe that's one of the reasons why I'm extremely concerned about this positive referral idea as well as the discipline I have to do.

Amy: In the five years I've been at Riverside, we've had two cases of crisis counselling, so it's dependent on the type of population you have.
Beryl: Very much so.

Beryl: We have a lot of behaviour disordered or special-needs kids who really almost fall into the category, not on a daily basis, but periodically, just even to reach the stage where they can't cope any more, and they do some bizarre kinds of things.

> Researcher: One of the things that seems to be linked a bit with SES level is discipline. You made the comment, Amy, that your kids come to school able to interact with all sorts of people and talk with people, and that you can have a fairly simple discipline policy that works. You commented, Beryl, that you have quite a bit more problem with discipline, but, again, I think it's got another link there [special education], too, that I'll bring up. If you listen to what people say about inner-city schools, then it's another matter again.
> Beryl: I gather, looking back, that here [at Suburbia] discipline was a major concern and that the staff really went to town at the beginning of last year in trying to decide on some very specific rules and came up with some fairly tight major and minor offences, and this constitutes major, and this constitutes minor, but I have never operated like that before.
>
> Researcher: Do you see it [discipline] tied to SES levels at all, Beryl?
> Beryl: I don't think so.
> Researcher: How about you, Amy?
> Amy: I don't think so. It's the way people are brought up.
> Craig: And there sure has been a change!
> Amy: . . . and their beliefs.
> Craig: Perceptions, responses.
> Amy: You can have people with excellent work ethics from all sort of economic backgrounds.
> Craig: There doesn't seem to be a measure. You can have a child battering from a Ph.D. parent, which happens, and you can also have it from the other end; it's where people are coming from.

Each of the principals commented on this matter after they had read the first draft of this chapter. They then admitted that they believe that different approaches to discipline are required in different socio-economic settings.

Innovator

Data gathered during the research produced no evidence of significant differences, environmentally generated or otherwise, with regard to how principals implement change in their schools. However, I would leave this theme in any follow-up studies, as I believe that schools with cultural differences may demand different approaches to innovation.

High Priest

Developing staff cohesiveness in small and large schools caused the only significant differences between how principals performed in this area. In small schools it is easy to get to know everyone, but with a heavy teaching load the principals have to make an effort to do that. In large schools principals have to devise strategies to develop cohesiveness between staff members.

> Craig: One has to make a conscious effort, even when you're in class, one has to try to balance between going out and playing marbles with the kids at recess, which is what I'd like to do, as well as going and having a cup of coffee with the staff and sharing ideas and developing rapport there. One walks a balance between both, so one alternates; one consciously attempts to say, "Well, Monday, beginning of the week, I better hit the staff room first recess and have a cup of coffee and find out how the weekend went, how staff are doing." Then the afternoon I'll go out and play marbles with the kids, and one has to balance both. It's difficult enough just attempting to communicate with the Assistant Principal; we rely on Post-It notes on a chronic basis.

> Amy: In a big school cliques form, informal support groups form, and you can avoid a person forever. You can even avoid them at a staff meeting. I think at the last school I was at we had over forty people at a staff meeting. Well, I mean, by the time you got all the tables, I think it was something like this: If someone sat here, you could sit way back here and not even have eye contact with them. The first time I came to a staff meeting here and I looked around the table, I thought, "This is it? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven." So I do find that the small staff tends to be more tolerant. And on this staff there's definitely some individual differences, but they're so subtle. You still find the two people who don't say much to each other sitting next to each other at a staff meeting and tolerating each other and being polite. . . . They're like that. So I think cohesiveness--there's more of a cohesiveness and less of a chance for their mutiny.

> Beryl: Unification of the staff. No, I can't think of anything specifically that's major. Or actually, maybe I

shouldn't say that, because I think maybe those are major areas, that whole business of interaction.
Researcher: Just because there are so many more people to interact with?
Beryl: Yes.

Amy: I find small schools, the staff's more tolerant of each other. I came to Riverside from a large school as an assistant principal, and that large school had English classes, and it had Immersion classes, it had Special Ed. classes, it had a district center for Academic Challenge. There were so many people on staff, including support staff, that it tended to have cliques, and even as an administrator in that situation--there were eleven portables out there--you could not see a teacher for months on end if you didn't make a point of going out there to find out if they had actually appeared at work. I work on a small staff now. But in terms of the teaching staff, they're more tolerant of one another's idiosyncracies, because they don't have a clique to run to, or they know they have to sit next to this person at a staff meeting; they can't sit three tables away.
Craig: The big chill.
Amy: Yes, the big chill. And so in terms of staff, even though . . . .
Beryl: Mmm [agreement]. I think I mentioned that, too.
Amy: I think there is more of a collegiality.
Beryl: I think so.
Researcher: Do you feel that way, Craig?
Craig: Mm-hmm.

Researcher: Just going back to the staff cohesiveness, when I was looking at some differences there, Beryl, you commented that you have to work on a core of teachers and hope that the network will spread out, whereas more particularly you, Amy, were saying in the staffroom as a group, you're more cohesive that way. How do you find your networks are working, Beryl, after however many months it is here?
Beryl: I thought that they were going reasonably well. We've had a little backturn here in terms of someone coming back from a leave, which is sort of bumping a couple of people, and that's a sensitive issue at the moment.
Craig: It's causing headaches. [Laughter]
Beryl: Yes. And they're all things that I feel can be worked out and that they're not crises by any stretch of the imagination--well, could develop that way if a person let them. I try to keep them reasonably well informed as to how I'm approaching things, so they're starting to get enough confidence to come and ask me. If they've run into something that they're not sure about or somebody's said something that upset them, at least they'll come and say something, so that rapport is coming; you don't get that overnight.

Chapter 9

Findings and Implications for Principals Starting in New Schools, School Jurisdictions, Principal Trainers, and Further Research

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) state:

> One tack we are presently exploring is the extent to which the findings of the intensive care unit are generalizable not to other settings of the same substantive type, but to other settings in which professionals talk to parents, such as schools. The approach to generalizability as we have just described it is embraced more by researchers who are interested in generating what is called a grounded theory. (p. 41)

I believe that this study will assist in developing grounded theory with regard to training principals to meet schools' unique needs based on environmental factors. This research has investigated only three principals and their schools. As discussed in "Implications for Further Research" later in this chapter, more research is required into many other schools to identify additional environmental factors which affect principals' tasks and how those factors affect their tasks. However, I contend that as the findings in this research are based on the study of three high-level principal leaders, are supported in most cases by previous research, and in some cases are basic common sense, the large majority of these findings will be supported by further research.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first deals with findings which highlight similarities between principals' tasks. The second deals with differences between principals' tasks identified in this study as being environmentally specific. The third section outlines implications for principal trainers.

Findings of Similarities and Their Implications

Findings

Instructional leader.

1. These three elementary school principals seem to make an effort to get to know individual children's educational needs.

   Kroeze (1984) supports this idea: "They [effective principals] want to experience firsthand what is occurring in the classroom. Studies suggest that they orient their efforts directly to the teaching-learning episode (Morris and Crowson, 1981) and participate in classroom activities (Lipham, 1981)" (p. 1).

2. These elementary school principals have a sound knowledge of the elementary curriculum, can provide leadership in this area, and are expected to do so by their staffs.

   Hallinger and Murphy (1986) add their support in this area:

   > Principals in effective, urban elementary schools maintain a strong task orientation (Venezky and Winfield 1979). Their primary focus is on the development of curriculum and instruction rather than on management or human relations activities. Studies suggest that instructional leaders develop a clear school mission, systematically monitor student progress, actively coordinate the curriculum, protect instructional time from interruptions, and maintain high standards for teachers and students. (p. 332)

3. These effective principals delegate some instructional leadership to staff with expertise in particular curriculum areas.

   Kroeze (1984) supports this finding:

   > The research on effective schools and principals clearly suggests that effective principals are more instructionally powerful than their colleagues and are more active in decisions on curriculum and instruction (Wellisch, 1978). Yet they can often disperse decision-making power by delegating authority to influential staff members who can provide strong leadership in specified areas. (p. 2)

Wynn and Guditus (1984) highlight a significant increase in interest in the management-team concept (p. 1). They believe that this is caused by a growing discontent with leadership, dysfunctions in bureaucratic organisation models, results of collective bargaining, principals' attraction to unionism, the success of participative management in Japanese and American industry, the endorsement of the team-management concept by major professional associations of administrators, and a growing body of evidence of the advantages of participative management.

Wynn and Guditus (1984) go on to say that they believe that educational institutions have been well managed but that traditional management strategies are insufficient to cope with the pressures within modern schools. Those pressures include the revolution in technology, massive demographic changes, changes in people's attitudes as they relate to their work lives, and a demand by staff for greater influence in their spheres of activity. They say that "it will be necessary to develop and utilize leadership potential wherever it can be found within the organization" (p. 47).

Staff developer.

4. **Staff development is high on all three principals' agendas. Formal and informal staff development are aligned with school priorities.**

Kroeze (1984) agrees that effective principals are strong supporters of staff development and staff supervision:

> Several studies indicate that effective principals are committed to seeing teachers improve their skills and teaching strategies. In doing so, they (1) engage in instructional improvement processes and promote inservice training; (2) publicly and unambiguously express support for new practices related to program improvement; (3) provide teachers with opportunities to visit and

> interact with other teachers for professional development purposes; and (4) are committed to supervision and evaluation of staff members. (p. 1)

Communicator.

5. **A free flow of communication of all types, in all directions, through formal and informal channels and networks, occurred in these effective schools.**

The A.D.P. Project Team '87 (1987) stated that "principals must develop strong communications, public relations, and even political skills as they seek to respond to often conflicting demands, to act as spokespersons for the school, and to gain support for their decisions" (p. 20).

6. **Each school presented a visual image that conveyed its symbolic and cultural ideals to the total school community.**
7. **The principals communicated orally, frequently, with all levels of their schools' communities.**

Kroeze (1984, p. 2) contends that effective principals make effective use of information and informal communication channels to influence district decisions and to gain an increased share of power and resources.

Manasse said: "These descriptive studies [of principals' behaviours] also have implications for principals' training. The preference for verbal communication and concrete information . . . is in stark contrast to the textbooks and teaching style of most graduate education programs" (p. 442).

8. **These effective principals communicated formal messages in writing.**

Business manager.

9. **Preparation for drawing up a budget includes consideration of all**

aspects of a school's operations within particular budget allocations.

Required physical and human resources and staff development needs were aligned with curriculum priorities established by staff.

Facilities manager.

10. **These three principals believe that although facilities need to be well maintained, concerns regarding facilities must take a lower priority than concerns regarding students' education.**

Sergiovanni (1984) lists one of the attributes of the principal who is a symbolic leader as "downplaying management concerns in favour of educational ones" (p. 7).

Piccigallo (1989) stated that "while acknowledging that 'a good building does not necessarily make a good school,' the report [Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching] concluded that the widespread 'atmosphere of neglect' in many inner-city schools impairs the learning process. (p. 405)

Staff supervisor.

11. **Effective staff supervision is an essential element of any successful school. The principals in this study combined the formal, system-approved evaluation with ongoing, informal evaluation.**

Schain (1988) said:

> While colleges can do basic training in the arts and skills of teaching, the actual training of teachers must take place in the schools where they teach. That's the real world and that's where teachers will spend most of their working lives. Accordingly, the question becomes, "Who will train our teachers in their schools?" The answer is quite clear--the school supervisors. It is immaterial whether the spuervisor is a "master" teacher or a professional on a higher license level. The important

> point is that the job of supervision of instruction should be the responsibility of people selected and trained for this job. Supervision should be the major part of the job of the person assigned. (p. 4)

Public relations officer.

12. **Parents in these three schools are encouraged to accept the fact that they have an important role in their children's education.**

Hallinger and Murphy (1986) believe that "despite this uneven pattern of findings, several influential school effectiveness researchers have suggested that parent involvement can play an important role in promoting learning (Edmonds 1979; McDill, Rigsby, and Meyers 1969; Purkey and Smith 1983)" (p. 333).

13. **Parents at these three schools are encouraged actively to accept education as a partnership between the school and themselves, with their providing physical support, financial support, and program advice.**

14. **These effective principals have developed good working relationships with their wider communities.**

Kroeze (1984) agrees that effective principals have a public relations role:

> Effective principals, as instructional leaders, recognize that co-operation and resources from other constituent groups inside and outside the immediate school community are necessary for educational innovations and programs to succeed. Since they view these groups as a means of providing necessary resources, they will develop networks of supporters among them. (p. 2)

Student developer.

15. **The three principals are concerned with each student as an individual.**

16. **The principals ensure that appropriate tools to evaluate student**

performance are used effectively.

Kroeze (1984) agrees that effective principals are involved in student evaluation:

> According to the research, effective principals devote more time to the coordination and control of the instructional program. They spend time working with teachers to solve program problems, setting up teacher and student evaluation systems, providing support for teachers' efforts to improve, observing teachers in the classroom, and addressing issues regarding the function, assignments, and roles of people in the classroom. (p. 2)

17. **The three principals, through a variety of "reward" systems, made students aware that their efforts to meet their schools' visions were appreciated.**

Innovator.

18. **The principals are innovative, prepare staffs for change, and ensure that change is not just for change's sake.**

High priest.

19. **These really effective principals are something of the high priest or priestess.**

Implications for Principal Trainers

Currently there is a wide range of appropriate programs of which prospective and practising principals may avail themselves. The University of Alberta has graduate courses in educational administration labelled "Topics in Educational Administration" (several courses), "Supervision of Educational Personnel," "Orientations to Administrator-Student Relationships," "Organization of Schools, "Planned Change in Educational Organizations," "Models for Decision Making," "Legal Aspects of Educational Administration," and "Educational Finance."

The topics in Educational Administration courses make use of texts such as Campbell, Corbally, and Nystrand (1983), Owens (1987), and Hoy and Miskel (1987). These texts tackle concepts such as "The Environment of Schools," "Organizational Characteristics of Schools," "The Work of School Administrators," "The Administrator as a Person," "Decision Making," "Leadership," "Communication," "Securing and Allocating Resources," "Managing Conflict, Change, and Appraisal" (Campbell, Corbally, & Nystrand, pp. v-viii). Owens adds "Organizational Behaviour" and "Motivation and Organizational Culture" (pp. viii-ix). Hoy and Miskel add "Organizational Perspectives," "The School as a Social System," "Schools and Their External Environments," and "Organizational Effectiveness" (pp. v-viii). A comparison of the 19 findings highlighting similarities and the above courses makes it clear that appropriate training is already available to assist principals come to grips with the major tasks common to all principals. Facilities management seems to be the only relevant topic not catered for specifically. As each school's facilities are unique, facilities management could be incorporated into the proposed expert system.

It is appropriate that such training is provided through the traditional methods of the expert instructor interacting with a group of students in the university setting or through the wide range of inservice activities commonly available. Therefore, the implication for principal trainers in this section is that they should continue current practice to assist prospective and practising principals through current methods. This will ensure that the basic, generally applicable skills, concepts, and practices necessary to principals are taught in the most efficient and effective manner.

Implications for Principals

As the basic, generally applicable skills, concepts, and practices necessary to principals are enhanced through current programs, prospective or practising principals should participate in appropriate inservice programs or graduate courses in educational administration.

Findings of Differences and Their Implications

As outlined in Chapter 8, eight environmental factors were identified in this study as affecting principals' work in the three schools. They were size, setting, educational level, socio-economic and educational level of parents, enrolment compared with design capacity, percentage of part-time teachers, special education classes, and education jurisdiction.

Findings

School size. It appears from this study that the size of the school has a major influence on how its principal operates. Of the 34 environmental factors identified, 11 are related to size. All of those 11 factors are caused directly by the teaching role of the small-school principal and the consequent lack of time for administration, the cohesiveness of the small unit, the lack of opportunity for organisational flexibility within small schools, and the need, and opportunity, for principals in large schools to delegate many functions. All 11 factors could reasonably be expected to result in leadership differences between small and large organisations of any kind.

1. **The principal in the large school had more difficulty getting to know her clients--students, staff, and parents--than did her colleagues in**

the small schools.

Pellicer (1982, pp. 28-29) outlines some of the problems faced by principals of large schools. That study provided support for my findings in this area in that it showed that large schools increase "demands on principals to communicate with students and staff, administer pupil personnel programs, [and] provide instructional leadership." Top hindrances to successful job completion were identified by principals as time taken up by administrative detail and a lack of time. Although principals felt that program development should be their top priority, it ranked fifth in their time allocations.

2. The principals in the small schools are more directly involved in providing instructional leadership than is their colleague in the large school.
3. The principals in the small schools lack the physical and personnel resources and flexibility to offer a wide range of staff development.
4. Developing effective communication systems was more difficult in the large school than in the small schools.
5. The principals in the small schools have less flexibility in their budgets than does the principal in the large school.
6. The principals in the small schools have more direct involvement with facilities-related matters than does their colleague in the large school.
7. The principals in the small schools have less time to devote to staff supervision than does their colleague in the large school.
8. It was easier to develop a cohesive staff in the small schools than

it was in the large school.

9. **The principals in the small schools are accessible to parents out of school hours.**
10. **The principals in the small schools are more heavily involved in student counselling than their colleague in the large school.**
11. **The small schools lack the opportunity for organisational flexibility which the bigger school can employ to benefit students.**

School setting. As with differences due to size, differences due to setting tend to be self-evident. However, they need to be highlighted for the benefit of those aspiring principals whose experiences have been in limited settings.

12. **The principals in the suburban areas have more opportunity to share resources than does their colleague in the rural school.**
13. **The principal in the rural school is heavily involved in school bussing.**

Craig mentioned that the bulk of his discipline problems originated from bussing. Discipline and vandalism on pupil transportation are problems of sufficient magnitude to warrant a session at the 64th Annual Meeting of the Association of School Business Officials of the United States and Canada (1978).

Dick Polanski (1978), Chairman of the Pupil Transportation Research Committee, said:

> The topic . . . is universal. It doesn't really make any difference whether you're a small school district or one of the very large ones, whether you're an urban or suburban district. It doesn't relate to whether you own your own buses or use contract services. The problem is how to control our children in the process of transportation.

Gary Cousins (1978), Co-ordinator of Pupil Transportation for the Cincinnatti Public Schools, who is reponsible for transporting some 37,000 pupils daily, told the gathering which included superintendents that high school students caused more problems on busses than did elementary students. He believes that boredom creates problems.

> The Superintendent and Board of Education rarely have the time for conducting investigations. . . . The school principal will decide whether charges against an offending student are accurate. . . . Responsibility is assigned to a school principal. . . . All written reports . . . are taken to the school principal for action, for decision. It is in the best interests of the child . . . that those who know the child best make the decision. . . . Principals distribute bus passes. . . . The schools are involved from the beginning of the year to the end of the year, day in and day out, on this problem.

14. **The principal in the rural school is working at the centre of his community.**

A recent article in The Edmonton Journal supports my contention that the rural school may be the community centre:

> Over in Rivercourse, population 20, young farmer Alan Svean isn't concerned about the loss of the local elevator either. In fact, he was in favor of trucking grain to Lloydminster, an unpopular point of view.
>
> Svean isn't so complacent about the future of the Rivercourse primary school. When Paradise Valley expressed interest a few years ago in absorbing the 41 students into its school, the war was on.
>
> "It was unheard of," says Svean. "There was a strong consensus to keep it here. Everybody is a happy family in that school. We jealously guard that feeling."
>
> The Rivercourse area residents prevailed, so the tradition of total community involvement in Christmas concerts and an annual summer picnic continues.
>
> "Small towns are loved by those who live in them," concludes Svean. (p. D1)

Educational levels. Although this study was limited to elementary schools, the principals involved identified several areas where they believed that their tasks would differ from those of their colleagues in secondary schools.

15. The principals in this study believe that they are more directly involved in instructional leadership than are their secondary school colleagues.

Kmetz and Willower (1982) support this notion:

> The question of how much is enough also applies to the principals' allocation of time to instruction and curriculum. The elementary school principals gave more time to these areas than did the high school principals, but what constitutes an optimum allocation is not clear. (p. 74)

16. Principals in secondary schools have greater budget flexibility than do their elementary school colleagues, according to the principals involved in this research.
17. The elementary school principals think that they are more directly involved in staff supervision than are their colleagues in secondary schools.
18. The elementary school principals believe that they are more directly involved in student counselling than are their colleagues in secondary schools.

Kmetz and Willower (1982) imply support for this finding:

> Like their secondary school counterparts, the elementary principals were concerned about pupil control. However, their concerns were more informally expressed. The elementary principals had much less correspondence dealing with discipline, and they rarely invoked more formal or more stringent measures such as suspension. Indeed. for the most part, they appeared to have amicable relations with the students. (pp. 74-75)

Socio-economic and educational levels of parents. Although some of the findings in this section are self-evident, others are possibly contentious, especially with those who believe that all people are born equal in all ways and should be treated as equally able in all areas. I agree with Amy's beliefs (pp. 50 and 180) that to ignore the differences is to invite trouble.

Noble (1987) said:

> Numerous studies have addressed the effect of socioeconomic status (SES) and gender on academic achievement. Coleman (1966) emphasized the importance of family background and argued that the most powerful predictor of school performance is socioeconomic status. Calliste (1982) contended that the higher SES students were likely to have higher academic achievement, a better self-concept. (p. 137)

19. These principals varied communication techniques according to the educational levels of their parents and students.
20. The principal in the high socio-economic area has easier access to additional funding from parents than do her colleagues.
21. The better educated parents at Riverside want more say in educational programs than do the less well educated parents.
22. The better educated parents at Riverside want mental as well as physical involvement in the school.
23. The better educated parents have higher expectations of their school than do less well educated parents.
24. The parents in the high socio-economic and educational area are better able to cope with personal problems than those in the lower socio-economic and educational areas and do not put the same welfare demands on the principal.
25. The children in the high socio-economic- and educational-level area at Riverside are more precocious academically than their peers in the other two schools.
26. The principals vary discipline procedures according to socio-economic and educational levels of the parents.

Cross and Bennet (1969) support differences in the operations of principals working in communities with different socio-economic status levels:

> All [writers] essentially agree that the operation of the school is profoundly influenced by the socioeocnomic character of the community. (p. 1)
>
> A noticeable difference between principals of "high" and "low" schoools . . . was in the area of educational programs. . . .
> The skill required most frequently by principals in "low" settings was human skill, while principals in "high" schools more often brought technical skills to bear. . . . The problems of principals in low socioeconomic schools most frequently were occasioned by requests or appeals from subordinates and extraordinates while a plurality of problems of principals in the "high" settings was generated by the principals themselves. (p. 13)

Hallinger and Murphy (1986) support and expand on those views. They make the following points (pp. 339-347):

1. Teachers in the high-SES schools were more likely than their low-SES counterparts to talk in terms of meeting the needs of the whole child.
2. In low-SES schools, teachers and administrators focus on mastery of basic skills.
3. The high-SES schools felt under greater pressure to instruct in all areas on which students could be tested.
4. High-SES schools demanded more homework than their low-SES counterparts.
5. Principals of effective low-SES schools take a more directive role in the selection, development, and implementation of curriculum and instructional programs than do their colleagues in high-SES schools.
6. Parents in the high-SES communities were heavily involved in

many aspects of the educational program, whereas in the low-SES communities, parents were minimally involved in the life of the school.

7. Principals in effective low-SES schools made few efforts to involve parents in decision making.
8. An important part of the role of the principals in high-SES schools entailed mediating community expectations of the school.
9. Students in low-SES schools generally have fewer of the prerequisite skills for academic success and place a lower value on schooling than do their peers in high-SES schools.
10. In the low-SES schools, high expectations on the part of school staff are critical. In high-SES schools, the high expectations of parents are more influential.

Enrolment compared with design capacity.

27. **The principals in the two schools where enrolment is below design capacity work towards full utilisation of the facilities.**

One of the recommendations from The Commission on Declining School Enrolments in Ontario (1978) was that

> the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities make coordinated statements of their policies on the training of increasing numbers of adults with incomplete secondary school educations. These statements should clarify for the secondary schools the amount of initiative they should take in "recruiting" adult students and recent school leavers, both for full-time and part-time study, in academic and vocational areas, and the legislative grant consequences of their behaviour. (p. 303)

This is similar to my suggestion that principals of schools with declining enrolments might "sell" their programs to parents who live in other localities.

Part-time teachers.

28. **The principals who have a significant number of part-time teachers have some problems with communication, organising meetings, and attempting to satisfy those staff members' sometimes conflicting demands.**

Cohen and Gadon (1978) list the following among the disadvantages of flexible working hours:

> A second disadvantage for organizations concerns communications. It may be harder to find times to hold meetings that require everyone's presence. Thus more consideration again must be given to planning. . . .
>
> The need for some kind of record-keeping system may be a disadvantage. When all hours are fixed, elaborate systems are not necessary for keeping track of employees' coming and going, though those who have to line up to punch a time clock would probably feel otherwise. . . .
>
> We have seen in some organizations that flexible working hours can make overt, subtle differences in status. (p. 45)

Special education classes.

29. **The principal with special education classes in her school had some involvement with bussing.**

30. **The three principals believe that children in special education classes may present discipline problems.**

Lang and Kahn (1986, p. 365) imply that special education students could cause more discipline problems than regular students. Their research was based on teachers' estimates.

Epstein, Cullinan, and Gadow (1986) in their research into teacher ratings of children for special education classes support that view: "It has long been recognized that children with academic and mental deficits often exhibit behavior disorders" (p. 225).

31. **Principals with special education classes will need to become familiar with specific aspects of those programs.**

Education jurisdictions. Policy differences between education jurisdictions can cause major differences in principal behaviour. The differences highlighted here are specific to the two jurisdictions from which the three principals in this study came.

32. **Budget flexibility depends on financial delegations from the board to the school.**

Amy and Beryl enjoyed the benefits of having much greater flexibility than Craig's district delegated.

Hill (1982) said that

> in the United States and Canada, public education is a multibillion dollar enterprise in terms of both the value of physical facilities and the amount of money required annually to operate the schools maintained in thousands of school districts of varying sizes. The task of administering this vast complex is delegated to a variety of personnel of technical, professional and nonprofessional status. Because the schools operate under the statutory requirements and limitations of the individual states or provinces, and often under policies established by local boards of education, there is no single pattern of supervisi[illegible]r control. (p. 1)

33. **There were significant differences in staff evaluation policies of the two jurisdictions.**

34. **Different staffing and other policies made significant differences to principals' tasks in the two school districts.**

Implications for Principals

The following implications are directly related to the preceding findings and are numbered correspondingly. Where a finding has more than one implication, each is separately identified. These implications are aimed at principals who want to more than just survive in the job.

School size.

1. Principals being appointed to large schools will have to make great efforts initially to get to know their clients. They will have to make efforts to meet people and may need to make efforts to get out of the office frequently.

2.1. Principals in small schools should provide a good teaching role model for teachers on their staffs.

2.2. Principals in small schools will probably have to provide instructional leadership in several, if not all, curriculum areas.

2.3. Principals of large schools may need to take some teaching role to gain credibility with their staffs.

2.4. Principals in large schools should identify the experts on staff who can provide instructional leadership and delegate accordingly.

3. Principals in small schools may have to personally provide a considerable amount of staff development for their teachers.

4.1. Teaching principals must make time to communicate with their total communities.

4.2. Principals in small schools must be prepared to carry out many mundane tasks which principals in larger schools should delegate.

4.3. Principals in large schools need to develop effective communication channels and networks.

4.4. Principals in large schools must be able to delegate effectively.

5. With less flexibility in their budgets, principals in smaller schools need to develop long-range plans when considering the purchase of expensive items.

6. While principals in large schools can delegate many

facilities-related matters, their colleagues in small schools will need to attend to problems in this area promptly.

7. Because of time constraints due to teaching loads, principals in small schools need to plan time frames for teacher supervision carefully, while their colleagues in large schools can delegate much of this.

8. Principals in small schools need to make time to develop staff cohesiveness, and principals in large schools will need to develop networks to assist in this area.

9. Teaching principals in small schools may need to be prepared to be accessible to parents out of school hours to ensure that their teaching is not interrupted and that accessibility to parents is maximised.

10. Principals in large schools usually have the services of a counsellor, but their colleagues in small schools may have to do most of the student counselling themselves. Therefore, they would benefit from some training in this field.

11. Principals in small schools should make the most of staff cohesiveness and also look outside the school for opportunities to broaden the range of educational experiences available to students to make up for the lack of flexibility enjoyed in large schools.

School setting.

12. Principals in urban and suburban schools should investigate the possibility of sharing resources, facilities, and personnel with neighbouring schools.

13. Principals appointed to schools serviced by busses should:

13.1. Get to know routes quickly.

13.2. Get to know the drivers and their strengths and weaknesses quickly.

13.3. Be prepared for discipline problems originating from bus travel.

14. Principals of rural schools should be prepared to become involved in community activities, as the school is often the hub of the community.

Educational levels.

15. Staffs in elementary schools will expect their principals to be conversant with the curriculum and teaching strategies throughout the school, and be able to provide corresponding instructional leadership. Staffs in secondary schools would not have the same expectations of their principals.

16. Principals in elementary schools can expect less budget flexibility and smaller allocations than secondary school principals.

17. While secondary school principals should delegate much of the staff supervision to senior staff, elementary school principals may have to carry out all formal evaluations themselves.

18. Elementary school principals may need to be heavily involved in student counselling and should receive appropriate training.

Socio-economic and educational level of parents.

19. Principals need to get to know the educational levels of the community quickly and pitch their communication levels accordingly. Neither students nor parents want a principal who speaks over their heads or at too immature a level.

20. Principals in high socio-economic areas will probably have access to additional funding from parents. Principals in low

socio-economic areas need to become familiar with possible sources of additional funding.

21. Well educated parents will want a say in educational programs. The wise principal will provide opportunities for this to happen.

22. While encouraging the physical involvement of parents at all schools, principals dealing with well educated parents should be seeking their advice on their schools' programs and/or in identifying other experts who can provide assistance.

23. Better educated parents will have high expectations of the school and may "shop around" for the best school for their children. Principals in areas where parents are well educated must ensure that they extend children educationally.

24. Principals in low socio-economic areas where parents also have low educational levels need to either take on many welfare roles or know the appropriate agencies to which parents should be referred.

25. Principals of schools in high socio-economic areas where levels of education are high need strategies to deal with precocious students. These include:

25.1. Having appropriate extension programs. These may include acceleration, horizontal extension, or additional subjects and courses.

25.2. The principal should ensure that all staff treat bright children appropriately, not just treat them as "sassy kids."

26. Principals need to assess whether their discipline strategies are suited to their students. Children in high socio-economic areas may come to school practising more appropriate behaviours than their peers in low socio-economic areas.

Enrolment compared with design capacity.

27. Principals in schools with declining enrolments may need to help their communities develop strategies to maintain their schools' viability. Strategies found successful in this study were:

27.1. Encourage paid use of school facilities by day-care and after-school-care organisations.

27.2. Encourage paid use of school facilities during school time by other organisations.

27.3. "Sell" the school to parents from outside the feeder area as a better alternative for their children than their local school.

Part-time teachers.

28. Principals with a significant proportion of part-time teachers on staff may need to:

28.1. Develop strategies to ensure that part-time staff are not overlooked in any communication or school activity.

28.2. Insist that part-time teaching also entails some part-time extracurricular activities.

28.3. Ensure that the part-time teachers' contribution to the school outweighs any disadvantages of having the part-time teachers on staff.

Special education classes.

29. Principals with special education classes in their schools may need to be aware of problems caused by bussing.

30. Principals with special education classes in their schools may have to review their schools' discipline policies.

31. Principals with special education classes in their schools may need to become aware of:

31.1. Referral and testing procedures and instruments.

31.2. Key personnel, such as psychologists and therapists.

31.3. Family situations and parent needs.

Education jurisdictions.

32. Principals need to be aware of exactly which functions are delegated from the board to the school.

33. Principals need to be aware of their jurisdictions' teacher evaluation policies.

34. Principals need to be aware of their jurisdictions' staffing and other policies.

Implications for Education Jurisdictions

School boards and their superintendents cannot expect any outside organisation to have a thorough knowledge of their boards' policies. Therefore, they should ensure that they provide appropriate training for their new principals, preferably before they take up their positions. This would be particularly relevant if the new principals are coming from other jurisdictions which may have very different policies in major areas such as finance and teacher evaluation.

Implications for Principal Trainers

Estler (cited in Boyan, 1988) stated that "by understanding . . . the range of organizational conditions . . . the administrator can be better prepared" (p. 316). I have been unable to discover any evidence of a major program designed to train principals to meet the unique needs of schools. Specific needs may be due to a very wide range of environmental factors, many of which have not been identified, let alone addressed, in this study. Some additional factors which come to mind readily are listed below:

School size. Categories could be increased to include very small and very large schools.

School setting. Variations here are almost limitless and include very isolated schools, mining communities, itinerant populations, inner-city schools, multicultural schools, schools where children are predominantly of one culture other than the mainstream culture of the province, religious schools, and independent schools.

Educational levels. Categories here need to be extended to junior high, high school, and the various combinations which exist.

Socio-economic and educational level of parents. Categories here need to be extended to low, at least.

No doubt, further research would disclose a significant number of environmental factors which affect principal behaviour. It is understandable, then, that no training institution has attempted to meet such diverse needs. To begin with, few principals would want to know everything about every school they would ever be likely to encounter. They would want to know only about their own next schools. Further, few students would have the mental capacity to retain all, or even a significant proportion, of the information and advice available on the whole range of environmental factors affecting principal behaviour. In addition, it would probably take a team of experts considerable time to impart such knowledge. Therefore, there seems no point in trying to impart that knowledge through the traditional means of a lecturer working with a group of prospective administrators. The impracticality of such an idea is probably the reason for there being no such program offered today.

An earlier section of this chapter proposed that current training programs be continued to ensure that principals have a sound background knowledge of the theories regarding leadership, communication, decision making, and the like. I now propose that a new type of training program should be implemented to help principals meet challenges in their new schools. They should not have to depend on what the last principal said, or on myths and legends, or have to reinvent the wheel through the process of trial and error. Programs tailored to meet the individual needs of principals going to schools with specific, identifiable environmental factors should be developed.

Modern technology provides an appropriate vehicle for accomplishing the task of training principals for individual schools. As discussed in the literature review, expert systems are in use in other fields and in some areas of education. There is good reason to develop an expert system to assist in the training of principals.

A submission for research funding to develop such an expert system has not been successful, to date, in attracting finance. How a system might be developed is briefly addressed in "Implications for Further Research." Prospective principals with access to an effective expert system could key into factors applying to their new schools, such as small, very isolated, French-speaking, and wealthy, and receive advice and guidance from experts in the various fields.

An expert system could fill a large gap currently left untouched in the field of principal training. This research could be the basis of further research to develop such a system.

Implications for Further Research

This section briefly outlines how further research, based on this study, could be used to develop an expert system to assist in the training of principals. It is suggested that such research would need to be in four stages:

1. Similar studies in further schools until an exhaustive list of specific environmental factors is identified. Such studies could be progressively less exhaustive as categories of specific environmental factors became substantiated and omitted from interviews. Self-evident findings could possibly be omitted at this stage. Once a large number of interviews were conducted--perhaps 50 could cover most common specific factors--it may be possible through quantitative research methods to support, or dismiss, grounded theories developed through qualitative research. Roberts and Burke (1989) stress that "one study, however convincing, is not sufficient to build research-based practice. The consumer must be able to generalize from findings of many similar studies before direct application into practice" (p. 330). Gay (1987) states that

   > the tentative hypothesis or hypotheses guide the initial data collection strategies. Initial data collection efforts suggest other appropriate strategies, and so forth. Following completion of the study . . . the researcher analyzes the mass of data collected and attempts to derive specific, testable hypotheses that explain the observed behavior. These hypotheses can then be tested in other studies. (p. 211)

2. Studies of the environmental factors to identify the effects on principal behaviour of those factors and the decisions principals have to make as a result.
3. Expert advice on those decisions.

4. The appropriate information from 1, 2, and 3 above is used to develop an expert system.

I appreciate that such a project would be expensive, in terms of both time and money. However, with the current emphasis placed on the prominent part played by the principal in the effective and excellent school, I believe that expenditure on filling a large gap in the field of principal training is warranted. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the group which has sought funding to develop an expert system to train principals to meet the unique needs of schools continue its efforts in this direction.

Reference List

ADP Project Team '87. (1987). Exemplary leadership: Four case studies. Unpublished manuscript, University of Alberta, Department of Educational Administration, Edmonton, AB.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Campbell, R. F., Corbally, J. E., & Nystrand, R. O. (1983). Introduction to educational administration (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Cohen, A. R., & Gadon, H. (1978). Alternative work schedules: Integrating individual and organizational needs. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Cousins, G. (1978). Pupil transportation, student discipline and vandalism. Audiotape from 64th Annual Meeting of The Association of School Business Officials of the United States and Canada, October 1-5. Washington, DC: Eastern Audio Association.

Cross, R., & Bennet, V. S. (1969). Problem situations encountered by school principals in different socio-eocnomic settings. Presented at the 1969 Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association. February 4-8, 1969. Los Angeles, CA.

Culbertson, J. A. (1979). Foreword. In D. A. Erickson & T. L. Reller (Eds.), The principal in metropolitan schools (pp. vii-xi). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Elstein, A. S., Shulman, L. S., & Sprafka, S. A. (1978). Medical problem solving: An analysis of clinical reasoning. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Epstein, M. H., Cullinan, D., & Gadow, K. D. (1986). Teacher ratings of hyperactivity in learning-disabled, emotionally disturbed, and mentally retarded children. The Journal of Special Education, 20(2), 219-229.

Estler, S. (1988). Decision making. In N. J. Boyan (Ed.), Handbook of research on educational administration: A project of The American Educational Research Association (pp. 305-319). New York: Longman.

Field, P. A., & Morse, J. M. (1985). Nursing research: The application of qualitative approaches. Rockville, MD: Aspen.

Gay, L. R. (1987). Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Griffiths, D. E. (1988). Educational administration: Reform PDQ or RIP. Occasional paper prepared for the University Council for Educational Administration. Tempe, AZ.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. F. (1985). Assessing the instructional management behavior of principals. *The Elementary School Journal*, *86*(2), 217-247.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. F. (1986). The social context of effective schools. *American Journal of Education*, *94*(3), 328-355.

Hill, F. W. (1982). *The school business administrator: Bulletin No. 21* (3rd ed.). Park Ridge, IL: The Research Corporation of the Association of School Business Officials of the United States and Canada.

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (1987). *Educational administration: Theory research and practice* (3rd ed.). New York: Random House.

Kmetz, J. T., & Willower, D. J. (1982). Elementary school principals' work behavior. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *18*(4), 62-78.

Kroeze, D. J. (1984). Effective principals as instructional leaders: New directions for research. *Administrator's Notebook*, *30*(9), 1-4.

Lang, R. E., & Kahn, J. V. (1986). Teacher estimates of handicapped student crime victimization and delinquency. *The Journal of Special Education*, *20*(3), 360-365.

Leithwood, K. A., & Montgomery, D. J. (1986). *Improving principal effectiveness: The principal profile*. Toronto: OISE Press.

Leithwood, K. A., & Stager, M. (1986). *Differences in problem-solving processes used by moderately and highly effective principals*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 269 881)

Leithwood, K. A., Stanley, K., & Montgomery, D. J. (1984). Training principals for school improvement. *Education and Urban Society*, *17*(1), 49-71.

Lolas, F. (1986). "Introspection" and "verbal report." In L. A. Gottschalk, F. Lolas, & L. L. Viney (Eds.), *Content analysis of verbal behavior: Significance in clinical medicine and psychiatry* (pp. 11-26). Berlin: Springer-Verlag.

Manasse, A. L. (1985). Improving conditions for principal effectiveness: Policy implications of research. *The Elementary School Journal*, *85*(3), 439-463.

March, J. G. (1974). Analytical skills and the university training of educational administrators. *Education and Urban Society*, *6*(4), 382-427.

Martin, W. J., & Willower, D. J. (1981). The managerial behavior of high school principals. Educational Administration Quarterly, 17(1), 69-90.

McIntosh, R. G., Maynes, W. G., & Mappin, D. A. (1989). Preparation for professional practice. The Canadian Administrator, 28(7), 1-5.

Minister of Education, Ontario. (1978). Implications of declining enrolment for the schools of Ontario: A statement of effects and solutions. The Commission on Declining School Enrolments in Ontario. Toronto.

Montgomerie, T. C., McIntosh, R. G., & Mattson, N. A. (1987). Old shadows, new images: A revisionist view of the principal's role. Paper presented to the annual conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Educational Administration, Canadian Society for the Study of Education, Hamilton, Ontario.

Noble, E. J. (1987). Redressing the negative influence of socioeconomic status gender in a treatment facility school. In The Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 33(2), 137-143.

Owens, R. G. (1987). Organizational behavior in education (3rd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Pellicer, L. O. (1982). Providing instructional leadership: A principal challenge. NASSP Bulletin, 66(456), 27-31.

Peters, T. J., & Waterman, R. H. (1982). In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies. New York: Warner Books.

Piccigallo, P. R. (1989). Renovating urban schools is fundamental to improving them. Phi Delta Kappan, 70(5), 402-406.

Pitner, N. J. (1987). School administrator preparation in the United States. In K. A. Leithwood, W. Rutherford, & R. van der Vegt (Eds.), Preparing school leaders for school improvement: International perspectives (pp. 55-104). Wolfeboro, NH: London/Croom Helm.

Polanski, D. (1978). Pupil transportation, student discipline and vandalism. Audiotape from 64th Annual Meeting of The Association of School Business Officials of the United States and Canada. October 1-5. Washington, DC: Eastern Audio Association.

Pugh, D. S., Hickson, D. J., & Hinings, C. R. (1983). Writers on organizations: An invaluable introduction to the ideas and arguments of leading writers on management (3rd ed.). Middlesex: Penguin.

Red Deer Outreach '86. (1986). The selection of school-based administrators in Central Alberta. Unpublished manuscript, University of Alberta, Department of Educational Administration, Edmonton, AB.

Rist, R. C. (1982). Foreword. Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods. By R. C. Bogdan & S. K. Biklen. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Roberts, C. A., & Burke, S. O. (1989). Nursing research: A quantitative and qualitative approach. Boston: Jones and Bartlett.

Rural folks battling for survival of their beloved communities. (1989, March 18). The Edmonton Journal, p. D1.

Salley, C., McPherson, R. B., & Baehr, M. E. (1979). What principals do: A preliminary occupational analysis. In D. A. Erickson & T. L. Reller (Eds.), The principal in metropolitan schools (pp. 22-39). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Schain, R. L. (1988). Supervising instruction: What it is & how to do it. New York: Educators Practical Press.

Schein, E. H. (1980). Organizational psychology (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1984). Leadership and excellence in schooling: Excellent schools need freedom within boundaries. Educational Leadership, 41, 4-13.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1985). Instructional supervision: A research agenda for the future. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Chicago, IL, March 31-April 4, 1985.

University of Alberta, Department of Educational Administration. (1988). DELTA Proposal--Draft. Edmonton: University of Alberta.

Vermilion Outreach '87. (1987). The changing role of the principal in northeastern Alberta. Unpublished manuscript, University of Alberta, Department of Educational Administration, Edmonton, AB.

Wilson, B. G., & Welsh, J. R. (1986). Small knowledge-based systems in education and training: Something new under the sun. Educational Technology, 26(11), 7-13.

Wynn, R., & Guditus, C. W. (1984). Team management: Leadership by consensus. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.

Attachment 1

Draft Questionnaire

Questionnaire

A. Type of School

Please write in the box on the right-hand side of the page the number corresponding with the most appropriate description of your school, in each of the following five sections:

1. 1 Elementary   2 Elementary/Junior High
   3 Junior/Senior High   4 Senior High
   5 Other: Please specify. ☐

2. 1 Urban   2 Suburban
   3 Agricultural area   4 Mining
   5 Isolated   6 Other: Please specify. ☐

3. 1 Parents with high level of education
   2 Parents with low level of education
   3 Native
   4 Multicultural
   5 Other: Please specify. ☐

4. 1 Public system   2 Separate system
   3 County (Public or Separate)
   4 Private   5 Other: Please specify. ☐

5. 1 Enrolment less than 100   2 Enrolment 100-299
   3 Enrolment 300-499   4 Enrolment 500-699
   5 Enrolment 700 - 1000   6 Enrolment in excess of 1000 ☐

B. Categories of Decisions

Following are seven categories of decisions which you, as a principal, have to make. There are spaces for you to add three further categories, should you so desire. Please rank order each category, where indicated, in the areas of (a) most commonly made decisions, (b) most time consuming for you, and (c) emotionally most difficult to make. Please use 1 for "most" and 7, 8, 9, or 10, depending on whether you add extra categories, for "least."

	Most Common	Most Time-Consuming	Most Difficult
1. Instructional Programs			
2. Liaison with Superintendent			
3. Parental Matters (welfare, complaints, suggestions)			
4. School Board Matters			
5. Staff Matters (welfare, supervision, professional)			
6. Student Matters (welfare, evaluation, discipline)			
7. Timetabling			
8. Other (please specify)			
9. Other (please specify)			
10. Other (please specify)			

C. Frequency of Interaction with Staff

By checking the appropriate box, please indicate how frequently you interact with staff in the following matters:

1 Daily

2 Weekly

3 Monthly

4 Once per term/semester

1. Circulate professional articles for specific staff to read.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Speak to each teacher on non-professional issues.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Speak to each teacher about specific students.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Speak to each teacher about programs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Speak to each teacher about professional development.	1	2	3	4	5

D. Your School

You have been promoted and your successor has asked you for guidance on the five most important types of decisions which you have had to make in your school. Please list the areas in which those decisions lag (e.g., playground supervision, difficult parents, staff evaluation, student discipline, liaison with the Board).

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

4. ______________________________

5. ______________________________

Attachment 2

Questionnaire

Questionnaire

A. Type of School

Please write in the box on the right-hand side of the page the number corresponding with the most appropriate description of your school and its community, in each of the following five sections:

1. 1 Elementary   2 Elementary/Junior High
   3 Junior/Senior High   4 Senior High
   5 Other: Please specify. ____________________
   ____________________ ☐

2. 1 Urban   2 Suburban
   3 Agricultural area   4 Mining
   5 Isolated   6 Other: Please specify.
   ____
   ____________________ ☐

3. 1 Parents with high level of education
   2 Parents with mixed levels of education
   3 Parents with low level of education
   4 Native
   5 Multicultural ☐

4. 1 Public system   2 Separate system
   3 County (Public or Separate)
   4 Private   5 Other: Please specify.
   ____
   ____________________ ☐

5. 1 Enrolment less than 100   2 Enrolment 100-299
   3 Enrolment 300-499   4 Enrolment 500-699
   5 Enrolment 700 - 1000   6 Enrolment in excess of 1000 ☐

B. Most Common Decisions

Following are seven categories of decisions which you, as a principal, have to make. There are spaces for you to add three further categories, should you so desire. Please rank order each category, where indicated, as the most commonly made decisions. Please use 1 for "most" and 7, 8, 9, or 10, depending on whether you add extra categories, for "least."

	Ranking
1. Administrivia	
2. Budgeting	
3. Instructional Programs	
4. Liaison with Superintendent	
5. Parental Matters (welfare, complaints, suggestions)	
6. Staff Matters (welfare, supervision, professional)	
7. Student Matters (welfare, evaluation, discipline)	
8. OTHER (please specify)	
9. OTHER (please specify)	
10. OTHER (please specify)	

C. **Most Time-Consuming Decisions**

Following are seven categories of decisions which you, as a principal, have to make. There are spaces for you to add three further categories, should you so desire. Please rank order each category, where indicated, as the most time consuming for you. Please use 1 for "most" and 7, 8, 9, or 10, depending on whether you add extra categories, for "least."

	Ranking
1. Administrivia	
2. Budgeting	
3. Instructional Programs	
4. Liaison with Superintendent	
5. Parental Matters (welfare, complaints, suggestions)	
6. Staff Matters (welfare, supervision, professional)	
7. Student Matters (welfare, evaluation, discipline)	
8. OTHER (please specify)	
9. OTHER (please specify)	
10. OTHER (please specify)	

D. Emotionally Most Difficult Decisions

Following are seven categories of decisions which you, as a principal, have to make. There are spaces for you to add three further categories, should you so desire. Please rank order each category, where indicated, as emotionally most difficult to make. Please use 1 for "most" and 7, 8, 9, or 10, depending on whether you add extra categories, for "least."

	Ranking
1. Administrivia	
2. Budgeting	
3. Instructional Programs	
4. Liaison with Superintendent	
5. Parental Matters (welfare, complaints, suggestions)	
6. Staff Matters (welfare, supervision, professional)	
7. Student Matters (welfare, evaluation, discipline)	
8. OTHER (please specify)	
9. OTHER (please specify)	
10. OTHER (please specify)	

E. Frequency of Interaction with Staff

By circling the appropriate number, please indicate how frequently you interact with staff in the following matters:

1 Daily

2 Weekly

3 Monthly

4 Once per term/semester

5 Annually

1. Circulate professional articles for specific staff to read.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Speak to most teachers on non-professional issues.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Speak to most teachers about specific students.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Speak to most teachers about programs.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Speak to most teachers about professional development.	1	2	3	4	5

F. Your School

You have been promoted and your successor has asked you for guidance on the five most important types of decisions which you have had to make in your school. Please list specific areas in which those decisions lay (e.g., playground supervision, difficult parents, staff evaluation, student discipline, liaison with the Board).

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

3. ______________________________

4. ______________________________

5. ______________________________

Attachment 3

Letter to Participating Principals

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241

21st February 1989

Mrs. Beryl . . . , Principal
Suburbia Elementary School

Dear Beryl:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. As we discussed over the telephone, I am currently studying for my Master's Degree in Education. I expect that I will be interviewing you on at least two occasions, the first being for approximately one hour. These interviews are an important element of a thesis which, in turn, is a pilot part of a longer-term project, Project DELTA.

Project DELTA is being developed by five faculty members with support from a number of graduate students. It aims to develop an expert system to assist in preservice and inservice training of principals for Alberta's schools. The expert system, a computer-based program, will help to prepare principals to meet the types of problems faced in specific types of schools in Alberta, e.g., isolated rural schools, urban high schools, elementary schools in multi-cultural communities.

In this study I will be working with elementary school principals in a variety of settings. Thank you again for your support. Please let me know if you would like a copy of my findings and I will be pleased to forward them to you as soon as they are available.

Our interviews will be treated with complete confidentiality.

Yours sincerely,

Ron Kirkman

Dr. D. A. MacKay
for Project DELTA team

RK/lp

Attachment 4

Interview Guide for Group Interview

Suburbia School

3:00 p.m., 28/4/89

1. Thanks, etc.

2. Emphasise similarities.
   (a) Children central.
   (b) Budget - bringing all threads together.
   (c) Communication - all directions, all types.

3. Taping - necessity to speak at different times.

4. Differences - Purpose to try to reach agreement on differences stated by one, or more, of the 3 or inferred by me from what was said.

   (a) Size of School
   Large - non-teaching principal
   Small - teaching principal

   Teaching Principal
   - (i) Craig and Amy - role model, visible, need to be effective teachers.
   - (ii) Beryl - need to find ways of demonstrating teaching skills.
   - (iii) Craig - cuts time for interaction with students and staff.
   - (iv) Craig - need for out-of-hours contact with parents.
   - (v) Craig - time available triggered by enrolment.
   - (vi) Amy - time problem for staff supervision.
   - (vii) Beryl - need to find ways to interact with children.
   - (viii) Beryl - same paperwork - more of job gets done in school time.

   Getting to know students and families
   - (i) Beryl - more difficult to know everyone on a personal basis.
   - (ii) Beryl - more children in need.
   - (iii) Amy - much easier and quicker to get to know children.

   Counsellor role
   Amy stated difficulty in allocating part of a position to counsellor; Beryl agreed and wants one in a larger school. Craig has part-time counsellor - Discuss merits.

   Mundane matters
   Craig commented on typing some of his own work and dealing with runny noses. Amy obviously involved at lowest levels of purchasing. Beryl seems to have big enough staff to delegate some mundane tasks - Comment.

Flexibility

(i) Amy - no flexibility re student placement.
(ii) Craig - we can only do so much and attempt to be successful at it.
(iii) Craig - time allocation is very limited.
(iv) Craig - resources much more limited - especially when new courses are being implemented by decree.

> So much of the educational environment is driven by student enrolment. That dicates your administrative time, your counsellor time, your clerical support time, your instructional staff allocation, and your library clerk time. Of course, your budget, too, is driven by the enrolment. One is attempting to provide the same educational experiences, the same spectrum of student learning opportunities with limited resources to accomplish it.

Comment.
Budget flexibility - please outline.

Staff cohesiveness
(i) Beryl - looking for cohesive core.
(ii) Beryl - time to get to know staff.
(iii) Beryl - developing networks.
(iv) Beryl - whole business of interaction.
(v) Amy - cohesive staff - easy on a small staff.

Craig - any comment?

Other matters related to size
(i) Craig - tapping community resources/personnel.
(ii) Craig - seeking additional funding.

(b) SES Level
Parent Liaison - Subtle differences apparent.
(i) Amy - rechannelling parent energies.
(ii) Amy - newsletter.
(iii) Amy - kids under pressure to perform.
(iv) Amy - parents' flexible timetables.
(v) Amy - high level of parent involvement.
(vi) Amy - advisory "but."

(i) Craig - parents very interested in what's happening - drop in when picking kids up, etc.
(ii) Craig - very personal level - possibly due to rural more than S.E.S.
(iii) Craig - advisory.
(iv) Craig - participation in newsletters.

(i) Beryl - writes own newsletter.
(ii) Beryl - no formal association.
(iii) Beryl - physical vs. mental assistance.

Program of Studies
(i) Amy - rechannelling energies - science program.
(ii) Craig - more "track" not followed up.
(iii) Beryl - parents happy to accept staff professionalism.
(iv) Amy and Craig - high parent expectation re academic performance.
(v) Craig - trips with kids.
(vi) Amy and Craig - well equipped homes.
(vii) Amy - dealing with talented kids.
(viii) Beryl - dealing with kids not working to capacity.

Discipline
Amy - kids come well mannered - able to work on self-discipline.
Craig - similar.
Beryl - discipline problem - related to S.E.S., size, or special units.

Other S.E.S.
Beryl - little spare money.
Amy - parents able to cope with problems.

(c) Special Units
(i) Beryl - extra need for documentation, testing, support staff.
(ii) Beryl - discipline.
(iii) Beryl - inservice re special programs.
(iv) Beryl - counselling needs.

(d) Elementary
Curriculum knowledge
Taught most grades, familiar with almost all subjects - except French? - know the curriculum with expertise in some areas.

Other elementary
(i) Craig - discrimination re funding.
(ii) Beryl - time for staff evaluation.

(e) Setting
Rural - Bussing
(i) Craig - consultation with kids, parents, drivers, central office.
(ii) Craig - route revision.
(iii) Craig - challenge and hard work.
(iv) Craig - supervision of other kids.

Rural - Ownership

(i) Craig - really appreciates rural setting.
(ii) Craig - client group more stable - parents were once students.
(iii) Craig - ownership due to close community ties.

Rural - Community centre

Craig - involvement in community activities.

Suburban

Beryl - sharing special kids.

(f) Design Capacity and Enrolment Levels

(i) Craig and Amy - lots of space; no timetabling problems.
(ii) Beryl - space at a premium - can't have computer lab and math lab separately.
(iii) Amy and Craig - selling space.
(iv) Amy - waiting list.
(v) Craig - developing strategies to keep school open.
(vi) Craig - dealing with perceived threats of closure.

(g) Part-Time Staff

Craig - difficulty in co-ordinating meetings.